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OUR PIC-NIC PARTY.

IT was on a lovely June afternoon that I first heard that a pic-nic loomed inevitably before me. I was slowly sauntering, cigar in mouth, round from the yard to the house, feeling considerably exhausted after a long drive, and enjoying that rarest of events in Ireland, a day without rain, when my reverie was interrupted by finding myself boisterously waylaid by my third daughter (aged nine), who informed me, quite out of breath, 'that we were all to go to *such* a grand pic-nic at Ravenshurst on the 25th.' This one leading fact at least I gathered with considerable trouble from a long rhapsody, joy having made the young lady curiously incoherent.

What a terrible fate it is to be a *paterfamilias*! Few are the roses, but many the thorns that adorn that unenviable situation. Reflections similar to the above, perhaps trite, yet nevertheless but too true, passed through my mind when, on reaching the house, I found that our neighbour Mrs. Groves (who had long been threatening some out-of-door festive gathering on a large scale) had called on my wife in the afternoon, and developed her plans on the subject. Ravenshurst, a large show place, its owner an absentee, was fixed on as the sphere of operations, as it possessed great natural beauties, which many people, not having before seen, might wish to explore.

Of course I need hardly say all my olive-branches were in ecstasies at the prospect of the pic-nic, which I, on my part, looked forward to with unmingled feelings of dismay; for I have come to that age at

which (with every well-regulated mind) I like to have my comforts about me when feeding. To eat off the ground after the manner of beasts, when it is possible to assert the proud privilege of civilized man and use a table, seems to me a strange, unaccountable, and most reprehensible caprice—only worthy of savages before the days of made dishes and knives and forks. But who can account for, much less control, the vagaries that we meet around us? Truly they must ever remain an unsoluble enigma; but while they exist—like all enigmas—they bore one immensely.

This, however, is a digression; we must return to 'our muttons,' the pic-nic. It was to be on a very large scale. All the county magnates within a circle of fifteen miles were expected to be present at it, and everyone was to invite a friend, or friends, and bring contributions of plate, delf, wine, and eatables. Of course it was to be wound up by a dance, either 'Au Clair de la Lune,' or in the deserted house at Ravenshurst, as best liked, that being the legitimate ending of all pic-nics. Such was the programme, and we had ten clear days before us in which to contemplate it from every point of view, and to collect friends to join us for it from every point of the compass. Mrs. Groves openly announcing that the more numerous our party the more welcome we would be.

The state of our house for those ten days was indeed terrible to contemplate. The Demon of Disorder revelled unopposed—one great pandemonium of confusion stretched

I need hardly attempt to describe the scenery between our place and Ravenshurst, as it is dreary in the extreme. The wretched husbandry stamps the small fields with a character quite their own; and the prodigies of Ingenuity (who reigns with undisputed sway) has accomplished in the ridges and furrows must be seen to be appreciated. Their singularly complex arrangements are suggestive of nothing but rams' horns, each wildly pursuing its own zig-zag course, in most curiously independent fashion. Pasture fields, so called, though minus the grass, were numerous, through which a few poverty-stricken cows were to be seen disconsolately wandering, with an air of placid resignation quite touching to see. But the costume of the peasants was what particularly tickled the fancy of our English friends. It has been justly observed that the Irishman alone, of all nations, works out in the fields in a ball-dress and court costume; and of the truth of the saying we had ample proof during our drive. Grandeur in decay is the characteristic of the labourer's toilet. A black or blue tail-coat, of superfine cloth—apparently a family relic, as it has never any pretension to fit the wearer (indeed, the tails sometimes reach the ankles)—but alas! out at elbows, clothes the upper half of the figure. Black cloth 'pants,' rather dilapidated, it is true, but still with remains of former chaste magnificence, or shorts and stockings, are *de rigueur* for the legs. But the crowning glory is the hat, which, sternly uncompromising in its adherence to the chimney-pot shape, still allows the Irish idiosyncrasy to crop out in the probable absence of a crown, which, if present, is generally attached to the walls of the hat by ropy twine. The costume, as a whole, most people might imagine to be inconvenient, but facts apparently prove the reverse. The effect is undoubtedly peculiar to strangers; for the rakish, *degagé* mixture of negligence and fashion, when combined, forms a unique whole, quite indescribable by pen and ink.

As we came to within about four

miles from Ravenshurst, our progress, flickering at all times, became feebler and feebler. Entreaty and coercion seemed equally ineffectual on our wretched cattle, which at last stopped, apparently for good, utterly prostrated, at the foot of a hill. We all agreed to get out of the carriage; and now ensued a series of strategic wiles, on the part of our postilion, wonderful to see. His grand object seemed to be to endeavour to delude the horse he had been riding (which, it appeared, was the delinquent) into the idea that he was now going home. With this view he unharnessed both horses, and with some difficulty turned the carriage on to a bye-road, striking off at right angles to the one we were on, but which rejoined it some two miles further on. This arrangement being all completed, the horses were again put to, and great results expected. But alas! alas! even the best-conceived human devices are liable to fail. Whatever hopes our Jehu may have cherished as to the success of his stratagem proved miserably delusive, for, with an ominous shake of the head, the unfortunate brute refused, point blank, to stir.

'Musha, thin!' said Pat, desperately, driven to the end of his resources, apostrophizing the refractory animal in tones vibrating between anger and admiration, 'Musha, thin, ye thief of the world! But ye're wary! Devil a one could get a rise out of ye!'

But, however comforting it might be to Pat to discover that the horse was possessed of a supernatural stock of 'cuteness,' it entirely failed to console us for being stranded on the roadside, four miles from our destination, which we were not the least likely to reach except on foot. To tramp, hot, dusty, and flushed, into the presence of all the rank and fashion at Ravenshurst was a terrible climax to contemplate; besides which a long walk of four Irish miles, in a glowing sun, would inevitably knock up the younger children. We were debating what was best to be done, when a friendly countryman volunteered the information that there was another horse within reach. It had been seen

going into a forge not far off some time before, and perhaps it was still there. Great excitement at once prevailed, and a deputation was despatched in search of it, and soon returned escorting an enormous quadruped with the most extraordinary combination of diseases on its legs that ever horse was doomed to bear.

The nearer and nearer he shambled up, the fainter and fainter grew the prospect of his dragging us to Ravenshurst, until on a close inspection my hopes sunk to zero. However, he was hitched on as unicorn, and our driver, who took a decidedly cheery view of affairs, promised great results.

'Billy,' however, as they called him, proved unequal to the emergency, and to the Herculean feat of dragging two refractory horses on against their will; so that plan had to be relinquished. With ever-ready resource, however, the postilion now proposed to attach the redoubtable Billy to the carriage in the place of the horse he had ridden, 'the bay mare bein' willin' to go and welcome, if that thunderin' villain,' shaking his whip at the saddle horse, 'would only let her.' The bay mare, however, on trial quite belied her character, for she greeted the approach of the stranger with a series of kicks and screams, anything but welcome to the harnessers, though they seemed to afford much gratification to her owner, who gloried in the agreeable surprise of finding 'that she had a kick left in her, when he thought she was done.' This plan also proving a failure, it was finally determined that the archdeacon and my second son should make the best of their way to Ravenshurst, and send our own horses back from thence to fetch the carriage and the rest of the party.

Innumerable offers of 'guides' now poured in from all directions.

'I'll show yer honour a pad, jist foreneste yees, that'll take yees out convanient to the big house,' volunteered a ragged urchin of unknown sex.

'Whisht, thin, Marget, ye're very forward entirely, disturbin' the gen-

tlemen,' interposed a tall lad, in the usual blue dress-coat and gorgeous gilt buttons, but who, as a counterpoise to its splendour, wore a straw rope twined round his legs as 'continuations'—'I'm the boy, yer riverence,' he continued, making an elaborate bow and curtsy all in one to the archdeacon, 'that sarves the clergy always; sure I'm Father Phil's gossoon.'

'He's but a donny crathur, yer riverence—never heed him,' contemptuously broke in an elderly female, in a blue cloth cloak. 'Be off, all of yees!' she continued, in a tone of authority; 'sure the quality's considerin' what they'll do. A poor widowed crathur, yer ladyship,' she continued in an undertone, turning to my wife, 'strivin' and strooglin' all she can to keep the little family. Musha, thin! but that's the darlin' child!'

This sudden diversion was a dexterous appeal (and not in vain) to maternal pride, as her last hope for obtaining a donation, armed with which she soon after retired from the scene, having first offered us a large stock of blessings not in her power to bestow. The archdeacon and my son now set off together to Ravenshurst—the former, however, altogether declining to avail himself of the services of 'Father Phil's gossoon,' determined to keep to the public road, on the principle that the longest way round is generally the shortest way in the end. We remained to guard our possessions; the horses were again unharnessed, and allowed to graze on the roadside at their own sweet wills; the postilion had recourse to his pipe, and so ended scene the first.

Two hours passed by, in which time we had reckoned our messengers might have about made Ravenshurst, when I was awakened from my siesta in the carriage by the tramp of coming horses, which, to our agreeable surprise, we recognized as our own. It appeared that about an hour after leaving us, the archdeacon and my son had been overtaken by the carriage of one of our neighbours,* who, having a couple of vacant seats in it, took

* *Anglice*, lad or factotum.

them up; which accounted for our speedy relief—a fortunate circumstance, as I found that the children, having become clamorous for food, had been detected by the governess in an insidious attack on one of the provision hampers, and had had to be bribed by biscuits, cautiously doled out at intervals, to keep their appetites in check. This state of things was now fortunately at an end, and we reached Ravenshurst soon after three o'clock, to find preparations for dinner nearly complete.

The scene, as we drove up to the house, was a very gay one; picturesque groups were scattered on all sides. The house itself has no beauty to boast of. A square, detached, red-brick edifice, with stone copings, it flaunted glaringly in the sun, and looked thoroughly uncomfortable, as, surrounded by its area, it presented no mode of in- or egress but by the hall-door. Its situation, however, is excellent, for, from its position on a hill, it stands in proud contemplation of the splendid demesne below and around it, adorned by fine old timber, above which, on the left, could be seen the spire of the church of the neighbouring town. On the right the ground slopes suddenly down to the lakes, of which only glimpses can be seen through the branches of the intervening trees. Opposite the hall-door the ground rises in a steep slope, and the view from the top of this knoll is celebrated for its beauty through many neighbouring counties.

Immediately on our arrival, our hampers were seized by Mrs. Groves' army of retainers, and she herself met us on the steps, consoled with us on our misfortunes, and finally brought us into the hall, the chairs and benches in which did much credit to her foresight. The doors of all the rooms being stretched invitingly open, we soon made a voyage of discovery through them in search of some paintings of which we had often heard, and which, being on panels, had escaped the dispersion that had been the fate of their companions. The paintings were three in number, all in the

same room. One, by an old master, representing Dido after the desertion of Eneas, occupied nearly the whole end wall; the other two, opposite the windows, were full-length portraits of the last Lord and Lady Ravenshurst, on whose death, without issue, the title became extinct.

The pictures are all good, and terribly out of place. The archdeacon, who is an authority on the subject of paintings, was in the middle of a long discussion as to the genuineness of the 'Dido,' when we were summoned to dinner, which we found laid out on a series of tablecloths under the trees to the left of the house. The incongruity of a meal prepared after the manner of the nineteenth century, to be eaten reclining after the manner of the ancients, was very striking, but it had at least the one merit of furnishing a picturesque *coup d'œil*. It was pretty to see the sun's rays chasing each other through the interstices of the arching branches which form a Gothic roof overhead, and peeping curiously at intervals through the interlaced fretwork to gain a glimpse of the spectacle beneath; but still prettier to a practical man was the tempting array of eatables spread out before him. If they had only been on a table! but there was no use in giving way to vain regrets, so with a sigh I seated myself *à la Turque*, on a very gorgeous railway rug, and prepared to make the best of affairs. Hardly had we seated ourselves, however, before we discovered that a host of marauders, in the shape of gnats, had taken forcible possession of our dining-hall, and were prepared to do battle with peculiar ferocity with all who came within their reach. They made such a furious onslaught on us, that, considering prudence the better part of valour, we beat a retreat, the archdeacon, to cover our flight, taking the high ground, that 'he could not reconcile it to his conscience to allow the midges to deprive the worms of their due.' We constituted the hall our dining-room, an impromptu cellar was formed under a chair, and a chain of satellites kept us supplied with necessaries in the shape of eatables.

During our repast, which was unfortunately of an intermittent character, we adjourned to the windows of an adjoining room to watch the battle still waging with great fury between the midges and our friends for the possession of the viands. One elderly gentleman was particularly noticeable for his untiring zeal, and appeared to be a most undaunted belligerent. His head he had enveloped on scientific principles with a yellow bandanna handkerchief, the storming of which redoubt must have presented enormous difficulties. His right hand vigorously and unceasingly wielded a branch of horse-chestnut, with which flapper he laid about him right and left, and must have slaughtered thousands of his aggressors. As his left hand was his only dependence for obtaining food, his meal must have been swallowed under difficulties, but his sleight of hand seemed prodigious.

As to the unfortunate bandsmen (we had two military, or rather militia bands in attendance), they must have had a dreadful time of it, enduring all the pangs of being devoured alive, necessarily passive in their torturers' hands, while pouring forth their floods of harmony.

After dinner, my eldest daughter insisted that I was to take our friends the Leighs to the top of the eminence opposite the house, and show them all the 'lions' to be seen from thence. In vain I pleaded, first, that I really could *not* climb hills after dinner; next, that my knowledge of localities was muddled in the extreme; the young lady was resolute, and I had, as usual, at last to acquiesce; for what is a paterfamilias but a slave to the caprices of those most pitiless of tyrants—his own children? How every day one more and more regrets the thoroughly false step of having brought them into the world!

Up the hill we therefore toiled. I tried to console myself by the consciousness that at least I was getting up in the world, which, with a large family, was a comfortable reflection, and in time we reached the top. A glorious panorama certainly lay stretched before us; whether it repaid the toil, however, was to my

mind doubtful. Grace Leigh considered it would have sufficiently rewarded a climb of any length; but then, as I remarked to her, it makes a vast difference in one's sensations to be only seventeen, and accustomed to early dinners.

Having done the view, we returned to the house, and my friend Groves at once pounced on us to complete a boat's crew, and we wended our way down to the lake. Here we found a crowd gathered round my fourth son, who had, it appeared, signalized himself by falling into the water. Fortunately, his eldest brother, who was by, did the next best thing—namely, pulled him out again, getting tolerably wet and intolerably cross in accomplishing it. As to the little fellow, he perfectly carried out the idea of a river god. Water dripped down his sleeves and from his white trousers in a regular cascade.

'How could you manage to do such a stupid thing, Charley?' I could not help saying.

'How was I to help it, papa?' answered my young gentleman in a very aggrieved tone; 'of course the ducks took the water the moment they got a chance.'

'And if you were so well acquainted with their idiosyncrasy,' I broke in, sternly reproving his levity, 'you were thoroughly inexcusable for giving them the chance,' having administered which rebuke, I made him at once come with me to the house to get his clothes dry. I need not dwell on his mother's consternation; fortunately, a fire in the caretaker's kitchen promised in time to repair the mischief; but the problem of what to wear in the interval was not so easily solved, it not being the way, at least in my family, to bring changes of raiment on a morning drive. At first we thought of sending him into retirement behind an open umbrella in a light and airy costume, compounded of his mother's lace shawl and our combined pocket-handkerchiefs; but a happy inspiration suggested the idea of a railway rug, swathed in which, like a mummy, I finally left him in his mother's charge, and myself returned to the lake for a row.

Here I stumbled on young Marsden, one of my son's English friends, and we started together in a boat for a pull across to Darlington, a demesne on the opposite side of the lake, which is the boundary between Ravenshurst and Darlington, and common property to both places. We could not help regretting, as we rowed along, that the two demesnes were not in the hands of one proprietor, as their junction would constitute one of the finest residences in Ireland. Darlington lies low, and has not the same natural advantages in the lie of the ground as Ravenshurst; but can boast of a very ornamental Elizabethan mansion, which, surmounting a terrace garden, faces the lake, as if, like most beauties, it loved to gaze on the fair reflection of its charms in the glassy mirror before it.

We landed near the house, and came across a very urbane gardener, who took us through the terraces, and from whom we gained many new ideas on the subject of French pronunciation. Here we wiled away some time pleasantly enough; and afterwards took to the boat again, bent on an exploring expedition towards the head of the lake.

It was fortunate that our zeal for lionizing led us to this unfrequented part of the lake, for otherwise the pic-nic might have ended disastrously for one of my unlucky children. As we pulled slowly along—for the sun was still hot, in spite of the lengthening shadows—Marsden turned round to look at the view behind us, and called my attention to a boat far away near some reeds.

'Perhaps they intend those eccentric proceedings with a handkerchief for a signal of distress,' he continued: 'I think we might as well go and see what they are doing in the bulrushes.'

We accordingly altered our course, and my amazement is not to be told at discovering, on a near approach, in the heroine of the handkerchief, my second daughter—a young lady, hardly half way through her 'teens,' who had apparently constituted herself chaperon to a little girl of seven or eight, her sole companion in misery. The latter had apparently

altogether collapsed when their boat stuck fast on a mudbank, for on our arrival she was in floods of tears, and apparently doing her best to emulate the historic child

'Whose tears ran down so fast,
They formed a little pond at last.'

We arrived before the operation was complete, but a promising pond had begun. It appeared that they had originally formed part of a largeish party, the other members of which had landed to look for ferns in a morass—of all places in the world, certainly, the least likely to find them. My daughter having slightly hurt her foot, remained in the boat, little Annie Graham with her. Very foolishly, she allowed the child to show her prowess with the oars, the result of which was—they were most successfully dropped overboard, and the current quickly drifted the boat on to a mudbank, where, hidden from the shore by a long stretch of reeds, and far enough to be out of hearing, the young ladies had the pleasant prospect of spending an indefinite period of remorse and terror. Fortunately, our opportune arrival released them from their unenviable position, where they already represented themselves as having spent 'hours.' We coasted about for some time for the chance of seeing the rest of the party, but finding no signs of them, we supposed they were engulfed in the morass, and we finally rowed back to Ravenshurst, where we found tea and coffee (a thoughtful provision of Mrs. Groves') in active progress, and those who did not intend to stay for the dancing making preparations for departure. Amongst these were my wife, the archdeacon, and my younger children, whom, after several failures, I at last succeeded in packing into the phaeton. Horses of not quite so decrepit a nature as our former posters we had fortunately been able to procure in the neighbouring town, so that the chances were in favour of the first detachment of our party reaching home safely. I was myself doomed to remain at Ravenshurst in order to spread an *egis* of protection over the rest of

our party, which was to follow in a few hours.

Those few hours, whatever they may have proved to my flock, were not the pleasantest to me. Standing, I know, by bitter experience, to be infinitely fatiguing; and my dancing days are, alas! among the things of the past; but the many silent martyrdoms endured by a paterfamilias, who can tell? None but the patient sufferer himself, and those who are included in the same terrible category of victims.

As dusk was fading into darkness, I saw a party of persons slowly approaching the house. Painfully they toiled along, travel-stained and weary. These were those whom we supposed peacefully sleeping in the morass, and still, perhaps, in their dreams seeking those valued ferns that ever, Will o' the wisp like, receded further from their grasp. Their adventures by flood and field were too numerous to be recorded here: missing the boat, they had necessarily been doomed to a steeplechase walk across country—through swamps, woods, and bogs. That they had at last reached a haven of refuge seemed to them the only drop of consolation in the bitter cup of their sufferings, though it was unanimously decreed by the rest of the company that they had not done at all the right thing in coming to life again: they had been comfortably settled for life at the bottom of the bog—their requiem sung, their friends consoled with, and now they had deranged the whole programme by turning resurrectionists upon our

hands! It was really too inconsiderate. They, on their side, considered the abstraction of the boat unpardonable and unfeeling in the extreme, and poured out vial after vial of wrath on my unfortunate daughter, without in the least compassionating her sufferings in mind when stranded on the mudbank. Their expedition could hardly in any way be termed a success, for the ferns obtained at such cost turned out to be *mas* and *femina* growing in profusion a hundred yards from the house, and nearly as common as grass, at which, I am sorry to say, my daughter rejoiced. Truly, human nature is but selfish after all.

At about ten, supper appeared, artistically formed from the *débris* of dinner, which rose, phoenix-like, from its ashes. Endowed with fresh vigour by supper, I took advantage of the access of energy to have the carriage brought to the door, and carried off my reluctant crew amidst a wail of regrets at our leaving and aspirations for our safe progress homeward. We did reach home in safety—an event I congratulated myself strongly on next day, when, condoling with our coachman on his being headachey, prostrated, and generally 'seedy,' he informed me, in a moment of confidence, that 'the champagne at Ravenshurst had disagreed with him; it was very inferior, not at all what he was used to.' The heathen had been actually, in these enlightened days, sacrificing to the pagan god, Bacchus! Of course I could have no further sympathy with his ailments.

O.



THE FANCY FAIR AT KENSINGTON.

THERE are certain questions of social interest concerning which the world's opinion will be for ever divided. Whether the miser or the prodigal is most to be reprehended; whether port or claret is the healthier beverage; whether we ought to marry on 300*l.* a year or wait until we have doubled that modest income; whether tobacco is a harmless sedative or a dangerous narcotic; whether Monsieur Blondin is a hero or a fool; whether we ought to light up our dining-rooms with gas or colza oil; whether it is Mrs. Brown who provokes her husband or Mr. Brown who aggravates the partner of his choice, and thus becomes the cause of those unhappy dissensions: these are points, I say, upon which there will always be diversity of sentiment.

Similarly, and to the end of time, you will find conflicting theories about the administration of charity. If A. gives forty-two sixpences to blind beggars in the course of the year, B., who subscribes to an Eye Infirmary, calls him a deluded man for his pains. B., on the other hand, whose guinea may certainly be taxed by Boards and Committees before it reaches the objects of his benevolence, becomes a subject for ridicule to A., who tells him that he can never say in what way his money has been spent. There are many good, generous-hearted people who object to any but the directest form of alms-giving, who set their faces against Charity Balls, Fancy Fêtes and Fairs in aid of the sick or uneducated poor, as incompatible with the purity and unselfishness of real benevolence. They hold, and perhaps rightly, that the sympathy which manifests itself in this form is not of the highest order; that we ought not to degrade a Christian virtue into a mere excuse for merry-making. But these moralists, who, no doubt, have a deal of truth on their side, must bear in mind that it is better for public charity to flow through such channels as these than not to flow at all. In these matters we must take the world as

we find it. It has long been proved that people will throw away money at a bazaar, which they would never think of bestowing on the object for which that bazaar is held, unless they had entered it and been pleasantly cozened into generosity. The means adopted may not be all that we could wish; but the result obtained is such as may fully justify the means.

Therefore, I say, all credit to the originators and promoters of, and zealous workers in the late Fair held in the Exhibition building in behalf of the Putney Hospital for Incurables. Few of us whom the clanging bells tolled out on the last day of the International show thought that we should revisit the 'Fowkes pallis' (as our continental friends called it) under such circumstances. Contrary to one's expectations, the bare interior does not look so large as when filled. This fact is probably owing to the absence of proportional *scale* which the fittings of the various courts and departments gave it last year. On the occasion of the fête about half the length of the nave was devoted to stalls, at least if one can so designate those elegant little boudoirs, roofed with pink and white muslin, which cast down the most bewitching tints on the fair *filles de boutique* below. Every counter was piled high with that wonderful conglomeration of useless prettinesses that one never sees but at a fancy fair. How much Berlin wool, how much benevolence, how much crochet cotton, how much care, industry, patience had been bestowed on their manufacture, who shall say? Embroidered braces, braided slippers, smoking-caps of *applique* work, particoloured pen-wipers and pincushions, scented sachets for pocket-handkerchiefs, dolls dressed in the latest fashions of babydom, caps trimmed with the most approved colours, ottoman covers, scent-bottles, toilette bags, book-markers, old engravings, modern crockery, Parian shepherdesses half buried under a *débris* of milli-

nery, plaster cupids hovering over little hills of *bric à brac*—the whole looked like a vast conscription from the German Fair, the Soho Bazaar, and the Oxford Street Pantheon—a perfect Loan Museum of fashionable knickknacks put up for sale, and presided over by some of the noblest and the prettiest of Englishwomen that ever stood behind a stall. The great Napoleon called us scornfully a nation of shopkeepers, and I think the ingenuity and zeal displayed by these fair merchants in the sale of their wares bears no unpleasant witness to the libel. Not content with using all their fascinations to induce a ready purchase at the counters, they craftily employed some equally-alluring agent to tout for them all round. The moment I entered the building I was set upon by two irresistible travellers for the House of Lady — and Co., who not only freely offered samples of their goods for my approval, but insisted on my paying for them there and then. Eighteenpence for a single rosebud was not bad to begin with, nor should I have complained at this moment if I had received change for my half-crown, which, strange to say, these young ladies totally forgot to render.

There is something very charming in what old ladies call the *laissez-aller* of these proceedings. In accordance with the admirable rules of English society a young lady may be sitting half the evening next to me at a friend's house; but though she knows who I am and all about me, she would naturally feel indignant if I remarked that the weather had been fine without an introduction. As for taking the initiative by addressing me herself, I really believe she would as soon appear without her crinoline as do it. But here a sort of poetical licence is granted. Mrs. Grundy issues her plenary indulgence, and we throw away our notions of propriety. What would the great author of the 'Hints on Etiquette' feel if he saw a dozen of his most hopeful pupils betwixt the ages of sixteen and twenty gadding familiarly about, addressing whom they please, soliciting half-crowns of

strangers with the most unblushing and bewitching effrontery, and actually omitting to give change?

'Oh, would you allow me to put your name down for this five-shilling raffle?' asks one. 'Will you take a few tickets to see the Guards' Ball Room? only a shilling each!' says another. 'May I ask you to take your chance in the Magic Pie?' cried a third. 'Remember, there are no blanks.' (No blanks, indeed, except upon the features of those who pay a crown for a sixpenny match-box!) Of course I am let in for all these investments. I go to see the Guards' ball-room because, I suppose, she was there on that eventful night. I put in for the 'magic pie' to prevent any unfeeling jokes about my being *crusty* in refusing. I take a share in the five-shilling raffle because—because, upon my word, I cannot help it. Then I replace my purse with a determined air, and resolutely walk on.

There is a good sprinkling of aristocracy among the stalls, and those of the *profanum vulgus* who like to feast their eyes upon a titled personage have ample scope for this amusement. I also pause before a certain counter, but with another object. In front of it there is a little crowd murmuring their admiration in unmeasured terms. Their honest praise is not bestowed upon the glittering merchandise, but on the sweet vendors of those pretty trinkets. What have we seen within the building to compare with *them*? What grace! what features! what complexion! what lovely hazel eyes! what soft, rich, auburn hair, and delicately-modelled lips! what tender music in their voices! what pleasant, winning ways!—ah! *caveat emptor*. He was a lucky fellow who left that stall before he lost his heart or spent a guinea!

A little further on the piping bullfinch held his *levée*; a gentleman usher, whose hat was stuck all over with tickets, loudly proclaiming its merits, and inviting an inspection. Here an old party walks about with a dubious *chef-d'œuvre* of some unknown limner under his arm, soliciting subscriptions for a lottery;

there a youthful but reverend divine is putting up a cameo for sale. Little damsels who have not yet attained to the dignity of long dresses, and whose crinoline gives them the general effect of animated pen-wipers, rush enthusiastically about, selling sixpenny German toys at the moderate profit of three hundred per cent. I saw one of these infantile hucksters tugging at the coat-tail of a tall, grey-headed officer, who turned round gently, and laid his trembling hand upon her head.

'What do you want, my dear?' said the gallant gentleman, stooping down to his pursuer, who was but six years old.

'I want you to div me a shilling, please, for this geranium,' said the little maid, stoutly.

'And suppose I have only sixpence in my pocket, and give you that and a kiss: will that do?'

The youthful florist hesitated, and then ran off to consult her mother, who was sitting near. Presently she came trotting back. 'Oh, pleath, ma says *that will make it eighteenpenth*,' lisped out the little rogue.

'Upon my word, I believe she is quite right!' said the veteran, laughing, as he slipped a florin into her tiny hand, and took out the change in another kiss.

At three o'clock the famed majolica fountain began to play, throwing up its crystal jets, and scattering perfume through the air. The people grouped about it, listening to the plashing of the water, and to the excellent military band which performed at the west end of the nave. This gave my friend, Mr. Wagsby, an excellent opportunity for his little joke about the music of the two *Coldstreams*, which indeed were both playing at the same time in liquid strains for our entertainment.

Another fountain, on a very tiny scale, was placed in the centre of the fair. This was decorated with flowers, and filled with rose-water or eau de cologne. Attached to it was a little placard which announced that SIXPENCE PER DIP would be charged to those who wished to

moisten the corners of their handkerchiefs with scent.

By this time the throng between the two rows of stalls became very dense. The Countess of Westmoreland and Lady Louisa Moncrieffe were literally besieged by customers. There is no crowd so difficult to pass through as one composed of ladies, partly on account of the overwhelming obstacles which crinolines present when mutually entangled, and partly because the usual expedient of *elbowing* one's way is, of course, out of the question. Hopelessly encompassed by three formidable hoops, I was beginning to despair of further progress, when a little incident occurred which produced, in a double sense, the diversion of my neighbours. A female cry of 'Oh!' attracted our attention to a baby form which was uplifted high by stalwart arms above the multitude. 'Goodness gracious, there's been an ackthident!' said a youthful Guardsman close behind me, and several ladies made a rush to the spot. The object of their sympathy, however, turned out to be a remarkably fine doll, of almost natural dimensions, which an enthusiastic gentleman was desirous of putting up for raffle.

While we are laughing at this unintentional *ruse* the sound of pipes and drums, accompanied by the loud clanging of a bell, draws our attention to a motley train which is proceeding up the nave. It consists of the 'sensation' players of an amateur company dressed in the costumes of their several characters. First comes the 'heavy villain' in a fine, laced coat and ample, yellow boots, scowling malignantly beneath his spurious eyebrows. After him trips that universal favourite, the stage sailor, clad in white duck, with an open, blue collar, and a glazed hat cocked very far back on his head. Next in order is the heroine dressed in a semi-rococo fashion, and shaking her auburn (!) ringlets coquettishly at the crowd. Being about five feet ten in height, and proportionably muscular, this lady attracts great attention; and but for the

eccentric habit of slapping her companions familiarly on the shoulders, and evident partiality for bottled stout in private life, her conduct is such as to excite universal sympathy. Closely following the object of his dramatic affections stalks a heavy swell in scarlet and gold, with a flowing wig and elegant little corked moustaches. The languid sentiment which pervades the expression of this youth leaves us no doubt but that he is the 'rightful heir.' Smugglers and pirates with canvas skirts and long, black boots of the 'Will Watch' type bring up the rear, and, amidst the plaudits of the spectators, walk down the nave towards the eastern dome, where a terrific broad-sword combat ensues by way of earnest for sensation scenes hereafter. Presently they all return to their theatre, a very imposing-looking edifice at the other end of the building. There we find huge placards announcing that the pieces chosen for performance are

BRAGANZIO THE BRIGAND,

AND

THE PORT ADMIRAL.

The platform in front of the entrance, decorated with loyal flags and Union Jacks, is occupied by a most indefatigable clown, who unceasingly proclaims the merits of the company, the scenery, and dramas, and loudly invites the public to ascend and patronize the entertainment.

'Now then, be in time, be in time!' roars Mr. Merryman, with a great deal of energy, and no stops; 'be in ti-i-me, we're just a going to begin, so be in time! This is the original and gen-u-ine drayma which has no connection with any other establishment on the premises; be in time, be in time, be in ti-i-i-me. Walk up, ladies and gen'lemen, take your seats and witness the great sens-a-tion of the age. Five murders, thirteen sanguinary encounters, several horn-pipes, and as many ghosts as can be put in for the money; now's yer time, now's yer time. The fust and most inter-esting murder is just

about to commence; if you don't look sharp, you'll be too late to see it. Walk up, ladies, walk up; the rightful heir is going to come into his property, and will, in course, distribute largess among the audience; this is an opportunity which may not occur again—be in time, be in time, be in ti-i-me!'

While this eloquent exhortation is going on, a youth, dressed in rustic costume of the last century, rushes about with little books of the play, inveigling old ladies up the ladder, decoying stray loungers into joining the audience, holding forth the most specious promises of entertainment, and gammoning everybody all round. Partly in consequence of these solicitations, and partly induced by the magnificence of the *dramatis personæ*, who, grouped about the entrance, now keep up a running fire of badinage, the visitors crowd up the ladder, first by twos and threes, and then by dozens, till the theatre is filled. Meanwhile, Mr. Merryman has hit upon a new expedient for attracting attention. Armed with a huge lump of pipe-clay, he harangues the mob in the following strain.

'Walk up, walk up, ladies and gents, and see the wonderful process of enamelling. This is the only establishment where the principles of this extray-ordinary art are properly applied. The patent has been bought from Madame Rachel at an enor-mous cost. Walk up, walk up, ladies, and be made bee-youtiful for ever. Now's yer time, now's yer time. Sit down, sir, if you please.' Hereupon, seizing the doublet of some 'bravo,' not actually engaged upon the boards, our friend in motley thrusts him down upon a chair in front of the platform, and before he can say Jack Robinson, whitens his face all over, exclaiming, 'There you are, sir, there you are, that's yer sort; bee-youtiful for ever! Hurray!'

This process was repeated on several of the performers, to the infinite delight of the mob, who fairly roared with laughter as the gentlemen operated on retreated, one by one, with floury complexions. At last, I spring up the ladder—not to

be enamelled, but to see the play. A lady, officiating as money-taker, is enshrined in a little niche outside. I pay my florin and hasten to the pit. What the price of admission to the 'boxes' was, I cannot say; but inasmuch as the entire auditorium consisted of Windsor chairs, disposed in rows upon the floor, it required a very subtle imagination, and no little refinement of conscience, to say where boxes ended and pit began.

I have said that two dramas were alternately represented: viz., 'Braganzio, the Brigand,' and the 'Port Admiral; or, the Mysterious Mariner.' It was the latter which I had the good fortune to witness, and a very thrilling spectacle it was. As Mr. Bowles, the author, has modestly expressed a wish that any one understanding the plot should explain it to him, I shall endeavour to throw what light I can upon its conception. And first, I must premise that, notwithstanding the nautical character of the title, the entire action takes place in front of a cottage door. As for the Port Admiral, the cream of the joke is, that he does not appear upon the scene at all.

The curtain rises, then, upon 'Giles's cottage,' and Giles, himself, who, harassed by monetary difficulties, and an importunate landlord, is about to fly to 'distant climes,' when he is intercepted by the latter person (Lord Othemanor), who, after chaffing him first about his impecuniosity, and then about his bandy-legs, offers to let him off on condition that he will give him his only daughter (Syusan) in marriage. When the honest rustic has spurned this compromise with disgust, and retired, that damsel herself appears, receives the amatory overtures of his lordship in an equally disdainful manner, and informs him that her heart is already another's. Finding the young lady deaf to his entreaties, the wicked nobleman (whose conduct all through the piece is remarkable for its moral obliquity) resorts to violence, and an abduction is imminent, when William (the mysterious mariner) rushes in, snatches off the bandanna handkerchief, which

Lord Othemanor has thrown upon his sweetheart's head, and rescues her. As this 'situation' is remarkable for its dramatic effect and genuine pathos, I quote the text in illustration:—

William [with Syusan in his arms].
Look up, my own true love! 'Tis me—'tis I!
Never was helpless beauty in distress
Without a British tar to succour it.

Syusan. My William!—thou! My own, my guiding William!

I knew I need but cry, and thou wouldst fly
From the far confines of the universe
To succour me.

Lord O. [who has been creeping round and examining William].

He's not so big as me [begins to tuck up his sleeves].

And so—[William looks round and kicks him].
Ha! ha! revenge! a blow! a blow!

I'll keep in sight, and hear what they may say.
[Exit Lord O. L.]

After a little spooning between the lovers, during which Lord O. returns and peeps in vindictively, William gives vent to his feelings in a hornpipe (splendidly executed by Mr. Bowles amid rapturous applause) and retires. Syusan then enters the cottage, and the stage is presently occupied by Lord Othemanor, disguised as a sailor, and accompanied by two smugglers, who first swear to do what he requires of them, and then hide themselves. The beauteous Syusan then appears at her bedroom window, and begins to warble. She is joined in the chorus by her aristocratic persecutor, who takes a mean advantage of his disguise to entice her down. She then is seized by the smugglers, but the ubiquitous William again appears, and engaging them all in a terrific broadsword encounter, leaves them for dead upon the stage, and rejoins his Syusan, who has meanwhile taken refuge in the cottage. Strange to say, his back has no sooner been turned than all the villains revive, and goodness knows what mischief might have ensued but for the arrival of Giles, who brings with him a large bundle of papers, to which is affixed the Port Admiral's seal, plainly proving that the owner of the handkerchief is the rightful heir. William (who it appears had been changed at his birth) here produces the bandanna as a proof. The

nobleman, however, claims the handkerchief as *his* property, and by this means nearly establishes his birth-right; but William, ever ready for an emergency, boldly meets the difficulty by stating the unlooked-for fact that he had been changed back again afterwards. This is regarded as conclusive. Virtue is rewarded on the old plan; the young couple are made happy, and the smugglers become tax-collectors out of pure spleen. Such are the simple elements of a plot in which our interest was sustained for fully twenty minutes. The acting of the 'heavy villain' (whose name I regret that I cannot record), and of Mr. Bowles, as the nautical gentleman, was perfect, and the curtain descended in a storm of approbation.

Mr. Burnand's circus was equally successful in its way—in fact, perhaps this performance drew fuller houses than the legitimate drama. The whole strength of the company, like that of the rival establishment, occasionally paraded the nave, and two monstrous-headed heralds, supporting a banner between them, announced the wonders of the show.

The latter amusements included the usual 'scenes of the circle' (supported by hobby-horses of tremendous spirit); a bull-fight, in which the quadruped, by a poetical (and classical) licence, appeared as Minotaur, the—

'Semibovemque virum, semivirumque bovem.'

of Ovid's verse, and made the best use of his horns on every possible occasion. Then there was the wonderful performing dog—a French poodle, whose hind-quarters were shaved as clean as your hand, which stood on any number of its legs except the proper complement; and finally stretched itself between two chairs to an extent which justified the belief that gutta-percha must have been incorporated with its constitution. Next appeared an amateur acrobat in fleshings and spangles, who went through his 'posturing' in a most creditable manner; made desperate efforts to sustain five oranges in the air with-

out the remotest chance of success; was always on the point of juggling with knives and never did it; heaped a tremendous pile of chairs together with the apparent intention of jumping over them, and abandoning the attempt just when his audience were on the tiptoe of expectation, retired with the air of a man who had achieved a success.

Afterwards came the modern Hercules, who lifted and threw about the most astoundingly heavy weights with the greatest ease, and would, I believe, have remained a hero to this moment, in the eyes of certain old ladies, if some one had not unfortunately chanced to sit down on one of the weights aforesaid (labelled about 400 lbs.), which immediately collapsed, and thus dispelled the illusion. Whether it was owing to this accident, or the general hilarity of the assembly, I cannot say; but when the dramatic *finale*, the 'Siege of Seringapatam,' took place, all the performers—both assailants and defenders—were so convulsed with laughter, that very little attention was paid to histrionic proprieties. And if the 'company' were amused, how much more was the audience? Everybody seemed to enjoy the fun; everybody loudly applauded the praiseworthy efforts of this little band in the cause of charity; every one went away amused, and in good temper; every one, I say; but was there really no exception? Yes, one. An unhappy little Frenchman—the very prototype of Leech's caricatures—with stubbled beard and extravagantly curved hat, had entered the arena, evidently under an impression that it was the English Franconi's, and of course, ignoring the end and object of the fête, was disgusted to find that he had to pay two shillings for such a frivolous entertainment.

'Magnifique! n'est ce pas, Monsieur?' said one of the company to him as he was leaving the tent.

'Sans doute—à l'ANGLAIS,' said Mossoo, as he clenched his little fists and went away in a rage.

But 'Mossoo' was decidedly in the minority.

C. L. E.

COUNTRY COUSINS.

A Town Story for Ober-linc People.

'I know you, Clara Vere de Vere;
Of me you cannot win renown;
You thought to break a country heart
For pastime ere you went to town.'

'THIS is what comes of your father's going to shoot last autumn at Sunnymead!' said the fashionable Mrs. Huntington to her still more fashionable daughters, Claire and Agatha, as she perused with evident annoyance, a long letter 'from the country,' which had arrived by the morning post. 'Here are Mr. and Mrs. Woodbine, and the Miss Woodbines, and Master Woodbine, coming up to town, where they hope to see a great deal of us, and to be introduced by dear aunt Huntington, and their cousins Clarry and Aggy, into fashionable London society.'

'Oh! do they indeed?' said Miss Huntington, the 'Clarry' of the affectionate letter referred to; 'then I trust, mother, that you will give strict orders to the footman to deny us to the three fresh-coloured women in a hired brougham, who are likely to besiege the house at any hour of the day, during the coming week. Country cousins on the rampage, and bent upon *doing* town, during the month or three weeks they can afford themselves at the hotel; I know what that is, and what it will be, unless we put a decided damper on the dear gushing creatures from the first.'

'They are good-natured girls, too—my apple-blossoms,' said the more unsophisticated younger sister Agatha, called, in the family circle, Aggy; 'and the attentions of Master Woodbine, as mother now contemptuously calls him, did not appear altogether disagreeable to my grandiose sister Claire, when we were at Sunnymead for papa's shooting last year.'

Oh, he was well enough *faute de mieux*, when we were vegetating down in the country,' was the reply; 'but I don't want him hanging about us in town, asking about everything and everybody, and in-

terfering with the men in our set.'

And in giving vent to these sentiments, Claire Huntington was not saying more or less than nine hundred and ninety-nine thorough-going London girls would have said under the same circumstances; viz., in the height of the London season, and with a hardly-won footing in an exclusive set.

A country cousin in the country, is, of course, a widely different personage from a country cousin in town; and the very flunkey who sneers at the cards as he takes them in, and remarks to the hall porter, that there is a 'ole pack,' and that 'country cousins always turn out (as mam'selle the French maid says) *tout la bootecke*,' knows that there is a difference.

The country cousins being uncomfortably conscious all the time that they are detected—or, as Lord Dundreary would have expressed it, 'knowing that he knows, that they know, that he knows,' and in spite of their natural self-respect, and their high standing in their own country, they sink at once into insignificance beneath that withering gaze.

Poor Mrs. Woodbine, when she did invade the Belgravian residence of her affectionate relatives, in the predicted hired brougham, with her two blooming daughters, *en suite*, prepared a gushing message, to be left for Mrs. Huntington, 'in case she should be out,' which was very unlikely, you know, after that long letter naming the very day and hour of their intended arrival at the Great Western Hotel. But the message died on her lips, in the majestic presence of the awe-inspiring flunkey; and as the brougham drove away, containing the bevy of country beauties (at which even a guardsman condescended to stare),

the honest country eyes cast a lingering and affectionate gaze at the house, and refused, in their own purity of purpose, to recognize, in the shadowy outline of a female form, the sylph-like figure of 'cousin Aggy,' who, at Sunnymead, had called her two young cousins by the most endearing and fond of pet names.

Had she not also condescended to appropriate Fanny's brown mare, and Magdalene's habit, and ridden to cover with Frank Woodbine and a troop of younger male cousins; while the 'dear good-natured darling apple-blossoms' gave up their favourite amusement without a murmur for their sake? Had not both sisters accompanied the said 'apple-blossoms' to a country ball, and monopolized with the sweetest of smiles all their most agreeable partners, on the auspicious occasion? Had they not, in every sense of the words, made themselves at home at pretty Sunnymead, and parted with a thousand embraces lavished on their less demonstrative cousins; and with the often-repeated sentence on their lips—'You must all come and see us in town. Positively you must!' And was it likely that eyes so honest, and hearts so true, as those possessed by the Woodbine cousins, should recognize a fair false form, in the figure which they had seen retreat from the window of the smart house in Belgravia?

Not in the least—it was their first season in town, and they returned to their hotel, hugging themselves in the belief that their aunt and cousins would appear *en masse* before long, with joyful welcome depicted in every feature, and take the country cousins to their hearts at once.

'It is curious, if we have missed on the road,' said Fanny Woodbine, who thought that she had kept a good look-out, and who had cast, on every carriage that passed, an anxious inquiring gaze—and 'Has any one called?' was the first inquiry made, when they returned to their hotel; their countenances betraying how deep was the disappointment, when an answer was received in the negative.

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'It really is very odd,' said Mrs. Woodbine, thoughtfully; 'I thought it would have given them such a pleasant surprise. I am glad now that we did not ask them to put us up, until we looked about for lodgings, as we thought of doing at first.'

'It's more than odd, it is tiresome,' remarked one of the girls; 'because we don't know where to get our bonnets, or to have our white silks made up, or anything: we want to see Claire and Aggy awfully.'

At this very moment the 'ole pack' of Woodbine cards were being delivered into Mrs. Huntington's hands; and she and her eldest daughter began an earnest consultation upon the best method of keeping their unwelcome cousins at arm's length—making up indeed, on the occasion, a long-established coolness relative to a milliner's bill, which had existed between mother and daughter, and which a less important discussion would have failed to remove. It required some diplomacy to shake off the intimacy established at Sunnymead, without forfeiting an invitation to that pleasant and, to them, inexpensive retreat during the autumn or winter months.

'We must have a fogie dinner-party,' was Claire's suggestion; 'we can ask them to that, and take them out shopping one day; and I really don't see anything more that we can do.'

'Well, I don't know what they might not expect,' said Mrs. Huntington; 'these country people are always so *exigeant* when they do come to town: and your father says that he won't have them snubbed, because he should lose his partridge-shooting, which does him so much good, and sets him up for the year.'

'That's just like papa,' was the amiable reply. 'Men are really too selfish: he wouldn't like to be bored with "the squire," or with young Frank all day himself.'

'No, of course not—one could hardly expect it. But a brilliant idea strikes me: let us give them our tickets for the next "Horticultural,"—they will take it kindly—

and you and Aggie don't want to go until the great one. I can send them at once.'

'Ain't you going to call on them, mother?' said Aggy: she had a lurking affection for these 'apple-blossoms,' and resolved to make a sort of stand in their defence.

'Oh, yes! some time during the week; but I want them to find out that they can't depend upon us. You would not like it, Aggy, if these "country cousins" came and cut you out in your own house? You and Claire are both looking rather the worse for wear already.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' laughed Aggy, mischievously. 'I should like to see Claire's face, if Charlie Longcheveux went on with the "apple-blossoms" after all. She would have to flirt with Frank in self-defence.'

'Don't be foolish, Aggy,' said Mrs. Huntington, who found a difficulty in impressing her youngest daughter with a due reverence for, and belief in, the deities of 'Vanity Fair.' 'I shall be very much annoyed if you are more than discreetly civil to these good people. I won't have them asked to tea; or do anything to put them on a familiar footing. It would only be uncomfortable for them, as they would not know a soul: they will soon find out that, in town, people go their own way; and that country intimacies are out of the question here.'

'Well, all I can say is, that when I ride to-morrow morning, I shall go and see our country cousins,' said Aggy, defiantly; and she kept her word.

'Where is aunt Huntington? where is uncle Charles? where is cousin Claire?' were the questions which greeted Aggy, as she entered the Woodbine apartments; and the ready wit of the town cousin forsook her for a moment, as she muttered with a shade of embarrassment, and something like a blush, 'They would have come, but they are not very well.'

'Not well!' said sympathizing Mrs. Woodbine, tenderly. 'I hope they are not sickening for the small-pox, or anything of that sort.'

This version of the matter amused Aggy so much that she burst out laughing, and answered, 'Oh dear, no; there's no fear of that; but the fact is, we have been out so much this season that we are awfully used up, all of us; but I was determined, for my part, to come and see you as soon as possible.'

'That's rather good,' broke in Frank. 'Why, my dear unsophisticated mother expected to find you here on our arrival: it would have made it so home-like, she said; so like Sunnymead, she meant, Aggy!' he added, mischievously, for he was something of a young cynic in his own way, and enjoyed a hit at what he thought the want of respect with which his mother had been treated.

'You know she is not too much "used up" to drive ten miles to the station to meet you, when you came there. And cousin Claire, what is the matter with her?'

Aggy began to wish that she had not come, and to agree with her mother and sister that it was absurd of people being so very cousinly in the mid-height of a London season; so she answered rather huffily, 'Oh, she's all right; but she would probably imagine, Frank, that it was your part to call upon her.'

'Admitted, willingly,' said Frank, (who was as handsome and far better bred than the fashionable guardsman, who allowed the attentions of the two 'Huntington girls' with such sweet condescension; observing to his new friends, that 'there was safety in a multitude.')

'Admitted, willingly; but how about my mother and the girls?'

'Oh, they must come and see us,' was the ready reply. 'Mamma no sooner heard of your arrival than she ordered the fatted calf to be killed at once.'

Oh, Aggy, did not conscience smite you as you said it; with regard to that fogie party, which was so unwillingly given in honour of the Woodbine invasion?—'You are all to come and meet some of the nicest people we know.'

'That reminds me, that the girls hope that their aunt will kindly take them out shopping; it is so

long since I have been in town, that I don't know the best places to go to.'

'I am sure that she will be delighted some day,' said cautious Aggy; 'she told me to say that she would have sent the carriage to take you out to-day, but that one of the carriage horses is hopelessly lame, and that we are obliged to job one, to papa's intense disgust; as Claire and I have to ride, which is not convenient for shopping.'

'Oh! I should like to have a ride in the Park!' said Fanny, enthusiastically: to which her cousin replied, 'Why don't you have your horses up from the country? the chestnut is neat enough in its way; but she made no offer of her own Arab steed, which stood pawing at the door of the hotel.'

'It's neater than that beast, at all events,' said Frank, who had been gazing at his cousin's horse with a critical eye. 'By Jove! it's not safe for you: look at its front legs.'

'Don't dare to abuse Ishmael, Frank, or we shall quarrel,' said Aggy, good-temperedly. 'He looks neat enough with me on him, I can tell you. But if you think him not safe I would not trust Fan on his back for worlds. Could not you get a hack or two, and ride in the Park some day?'

'I have no doubt that such animals could be procured for money,' said Frank, satirically; 'but I don't think that Fan cares sufficiently about London riding to spend her pocket-money in that way;' and rather uncomfortable under the conviction that the country cousin was learning to understand his fashionable relatives, and their intentions with regard to his family, Aggy Huntington prepared to lower her flag, and to beat a retreat before she had farther involved herself with the Woodbine family.

'Well! good-bye, dears,' she said in her off-hand way. 'You will hear from mother about dining with us: and remember, Frank, that Claire is expecting you to call upon her, before she feels it incumbent on her to remember your existence.'

'If that is not a cool thing, I don't know what is,' said that young man,

when he had returned from escorting his cousin to her horse. 'If I were you, mother, I would cut all these fine people dead.'

'It certainly is very odd,' said Mrs. Woodbine, unwilling to believe harm of any one: 'they were so very friendly and pleasant always at Sunnymead.'

'I suppose it is part of the holowness of the world, which we were always hearing about, and were believing in,' said Magdalene, gravely. 'I wonder if the Elfintowers will be the same.'

Now the Elfintowers were the great people in the neighbourhood of Sunnymead Hall, and friendly relations were kept up between them and the Woodbine family; they were very great people, too, in the London world; and to be on intimate terms with the 'Elfintowers,' was a passport into any circle, however fastidious, or however exclusive. The Elfintowers were as far above that set, into which the Huntingtons had successfully struggled, as the set in the housekeeper's room are above those in the servants' hall; their prestige was forced and undeniable, and would receive an additional lustre from any accident of fortune or favour.

Lady Elfintower was one of those highly-bred women who are 'the same' to you at all times; vulgarity and forwardness were always odious in her eyes; and she would never have done herself the injustice to tolerate at one time what she would have despised at another. She liked the Woodbines in the country, and she was not likely to snub them in town.

'I shall ask those pretty girls here,' she said to her daughters, Lady Katherine and Lady Jane; 'they will be quite an attraction; and they are always ladylike and well dressed.'

If dear Mrs. Huntington could but have foreseen this! She would have given her year's pin-money to have done it; but no friendly clairvoyante informed her of the fact. Why, the most distant bow from Lady Elfintower would have made her blest in her own eyes, and in those of rival matrons, for the whole

season; and to have been asked to her house, would have stamped her for ever with the seal of the elect.

When the Huntingtons party had been staying at Sunnymend, in the autumn, the Elfintowers had been away from home; and the acquaintance which had been casually mentioned as existing between the families, had been believed by the town cousins to be merely one of those social myths, which they were in the habit of passing off as realities, with regard to themselves.

For instance, the young ladies would talk long and fluently to their cousins, about those among their acquaintance who moved in higher circles than themselves, as though they were on the most intimate terms imaginable; calling them by the familiar nicknames under which the finest young ladies are, in these days, often known to their fashionable acquaintance.

Trusting to this, poor Mrs. Woodbine had hoped great things for her daughters, and had innocently boasted to her country neighbours of the introductions which she hoped to obtain from this quarter, for Fanny and Magdalene, with the best London society, which, of course, as quiet country people, they could not otherwise have obtained. She did not understand, good honest soul, that a certain class of would-be fashionables cannot afford to know country nobodies in town, and that clinging on for the bare life to the slippery ranks of fashion, they are not likely to burden themselves with an extra weight or encumbrance in the ascent.

No sooner had Aggy cantered off, than they felt themselves 'adrift'; the pleasant day-dreams, in which the girls had indulged, of gaieties and social enjoyments in store for them, under the auspices of the cousins, in whose favour they had sacrificed so many of their own in the winter, vanished and melted into empty air. A tenderer dream, in which the heir of Sunnymend had indulged with regard to his cousin Claire, was also dispelled; and the Woodbine family began to think rather regretfully of their pleasant country home, of the green lanes,

and the fragrant hay-fields, and to vote London, in the season, a hot, unfriendly, busy wilderness of sight and sound, in the gaieties and amusements of which, they were not likely themselves to participate.

The 'squire,' however, who had, as Frank expressed it, 'come down very handsomely on the occasion,' and who was as proud of his two pretty daughters, and of his comely wife, as possible, did not allow their spirits to be long damped by the *contretemps* with regard to the family of the Huntingtons.

'Hang all this nonsense!' he said, good-naturedly: 'what can prevent us from going to the play, or the opera? Not all the fine-lady airs in Christendom. What shall it be to-night, girls—Fechter, or the opera? I'm game for a box, and you shan't be disappointed of one or the other.'

'Oh! let us go to the "Duke's Motto," first, daddy,' they said altogether; 'we are dying to see Fechter, and mamma is so fond of the play.' And with sparkling eyes and blooming cheeks they rewarded their indulgent father with a kiss, for the bright idea which at once dissipated the gloom which Aggy's visit had shed over the family party.

To the 'Duke's Motto' they accordingly went; and the delights, the illusions, the intense enjoyment of the first play they had seen, made their bright, happy faces, a wonderful contrast to the jaded and pale ones, which the most masterly touches of the actor could only kindle into momentary excitement.

They had, indeed, gazed so eagerly on the stage, as not to be likely to recognize any acquaintances, either in the boxes or stalls; but after the first act, Frank, who had been sweeping the house with his opera-glass, to regale his eyes with some of the fabulous beauty, of which he had read and heard so much, suddenly exclaimed, 'Why, mother, Lady Elfintower and Lady Jane are in the box opposite, and they are bowing to you!'

'Well, it is really pleasant to see a face that one knows in this crowd of strangers,' said Mrs. Woodbine, thankfully; and she returned Lady Elfintower's bow with the simple

grace that was natural to her; for the Woodbines, with all their simplicity, were both well born and well bred, and no more capable of the meannesses of which the Huntingtons could be guilty, for the sake of a fashionable acquaintance, than of defrauding a tradesman or picking a pocket.

The two families met on the stairs as they were leaving the theatre, when Lady Elfintower ascertained where they were staying in town.

'I shall have the pleasure of calling on you to-morrow,' she said, smilingly, 'and if your daughters like to walk in the Park and see the Princess on horseback, I will take them with me; as I have promised Katherine and Jane that they shall go.'

'Oh! thank you very much,' said the girls, blushing with the intensity of their satisfaction, at this delightful arrangement. 'It is very kind of you to take us, Lady Elfintower.'

'Not at all—I shall be proud of such country bloom,' she said, smiling at the squire: 'you can trust them with me, I hope?' And the kindhearted woman knew that she had bestowed real pleasure, and went home happy in consequence. She possessed one of those benign and angel natures which the world cannot spoil; and it had indeed done its very best.

At half-past eleven the next day, the carriage called to take Fanny and Magdalene into those Belgravian regions, from which they had formerly been repulsed by the imposing flunkey, acting under the orders of his superfine mistress.

They were well and simply dressed, and looked freshly beautiful, their shy and diffident demeanour only distinguishing them from the beauties who had passed former seasons in town. They caused quite a sensation, under the distinguished chaperonage which they enjoyed, and were unconsciously sharing the admiration of the pedestrians with the graceful and beautiful Princess whom they came to see—so much so, that everybody was talking of the 'new girls with Lady Elfintower;' and the spark was kindled which so soon becomes a flame, when

lighted in certain quarters. The fine, listless, and exclusive guardsman actually forfeited his chair, and walked the whole length of the row, to meet the Elfintower party face to face—and the news of this feat on his part, spread like wildfire through the men in his set, so that the first thing which greeted the ears of Claire and Agatha Huntington—regular *habitués* of Rotten Row in the season—was, 'There are two such lovely girls with Lady Elfintower to-day, and no one can tell us who they are.'

'Perhaps they are Emmie and Georgie, the Hamilton twins,' said Claire, languidly. 'They are out this season, and they are both sweetly pretty.'

'Well, you'd better take a turn and look at them,' said Charley Longcheveux, puffing his cigar almost in the lady's face as he spoke; 'they are worth looking at, I can tell you.'

'Will you come, mother dear?' said Aggy; they were always remarkably affectionate in public. 'You won't be tired; and you can keep a chair for her, you know,' she added to the guardsman as she went off.

'Ta-ta!' was the reply of the delightful youth, whom the ladies spoilt to such an extent that his naturally manly nature had succumbed under the effects of it. 'Ta-ta! don't be too quick in coming back, or I shan't have finished my cigar.'

'What an impertinent creature it is!' said Mrs. Huntington, as though she were talking of the antics of a tame kitten. 'Perhaps, to punish you, we won't come back at all.'

'Oh, don't say that,' was the laughing reply; 'or I shall be obliged to come with you, and have another look at the pretty girls.'

Claire did not at all relish even this chaffing admiration of her unknown rivals, and this Charlie Longcheveux knew as well as she did: to tell the truth, his flirtation in that quarter was beginning to weary him, and he rather wished, as he told a brother officer who joined him, to get a rise out of 'little Clarry; as she was getting so

spooney on him that it was rather a bore.

The despised heir of Sunnymead, who had worshipped Claire with true and manly, but *diffident* devotion, would have been inclined to resent this speech to the death, had he heard it; but as his cousin was unworthy of his love, and as he was beginning to find it out, it was as well for all parties that he did not.

As Mrs. Huntington and her fair daughters went on their unwelcome mission, they encountered their cousin Frank face to face. He had wished to meet them, to ascertain from his cousin her feelings with regard to himself. He was high-spirited and proud, and she had given him sufficient encouragement, in the winter, to make him feel that he had a right to ask.

Claire, as it happened, was in a bad temper, or she might have foreseen the expediency of playing off one handsome man against another; as it was, she only said, with a fine-lady air, extending a very languid hand in his direction, 'So you *have* turned up at last; I thought, at this time of year, you would all be making hay.'

'No,' was the reply, 'we only do that when the sun shines, and it appears to be cloudy to-day. Is that all you have to welcome me with, Claire?' he added, in a lower tone. 'I came here to meet you; but you hardly seem glad to see me.'

'I can't be gushing to-day,' she replied, 'it's too hot. Of course, it's the right thing to say to a first cousin, one's glad to see them. Did you see that article on cousins, in the "Saturday?" It was so clever.'

Frank was too much hurt to answer. Was this the same girl who had been so affectionate to them all at Sunnymead; who had challenged the admiration and attention of the cousin whom she now wished to treat *de haut en bas*; who had ridden his horses, worn his flowers, who had allowed him to press her hand, and to whisper in her ear the soft nothings which had been sacred in his eyes, because they were dictated by his own honest love? It was indeed the

same, only she had now revealed her true nature—before, it had worn a mask. The sudden conviction smote upon Frank that she was playing him false; and, unused to conceal his emotions, he raised his hat and left his cousin's side, and was soon one of the crowd, who were thronging to get a glimpse of the young Princess of Wales.

'I will go back into the country,' he thought, 'to-morrow, and make hay. I never could have dreamt of this.'

There was a Nemesis in store for Frank's wrongs, of which he knew nothing. As Claire and Aggy approached the Elfintower party, they raised their eyes to gaze upon the new girls, whose attractions had made such a sensation in the Park, and to their unmitigated amazement, they beheld, when they did so, their despised country cousins, *Fanny and Magdalene Woodbine*.

'Impossible!' was the word that rose to the surface of their staggered senses, and found utterance on their respective lips. 'Fanny and Magdalene! Impossible!' And responsive to their exclamation, the affectionate girls stepped forward, and warmly greeted Aunt Huntington and the two jealous and discomfited girls. The innocent intended victims of the fogie party, and the rejected tickets; the sisters of the man who had been so cruelly wounded but a moment ago by the fine-ladyism of a deceitful girl, put all their country warmth into their greeting of their now *mortified* cousins. But Lady Elfintower, to whom the appearance of any of that set acted as a refrigerator, at once cut short the meeting, with the refined tactics of an accomplished woman of the world. 'I like the Woodbines,' she said to her daughters, 'and will introduce them anywhere; but any attempt at acquaintance with those *Huntingtons* must be checked in the bud.'

'If you had but been decently civil to them, as I told you,' said Aggy, aggravatingly, to her mother and sister, 'we should have got asked to the Elfintower ball—but you would go your own way. You snubbed Frank, too, Clarry, and

he's not the sort of man who will take much of that.'

'We shan't ever be asked to Sunnymead again: you women must always meddle,' added the father of the family, with bitterness. 'You have managed to make a nice mess of it between you.'

'Who could possibly have foreseen that the Elfintowers would have taken them up so?' said Claire, snappishly; and to put the climax to that young lady's humiliation, Charlie Longcheveux looked in, to tempt the ladies to walk in the Park—the sting of the sentence lying in the motive which he assigned for asking them.

'I've bet Lady Gloriana ten pairs of gloves that I get an introduction to those pretty girls before night: they're cousins of yours, I think you told me; so come on, and we'll go shares. I shan't mind one of them being spooney on me, if they like; they are something quite out of the common—*de-li-cious*,' he added mischievously, for he saw the storm clouds gathering on Claire's brow; 'it's difficult to get near them, Lady Elfintower's a regular dragon of prudery placed within call. However, let's have a try.'

'How about the fogie party?' said Aggy. 'Do you know, Captain Longcheveux, Claire was so ashamed of her country cousins that she wished them to waste their sweetness on papa's Indian Nabob set; but I think they'll do for something better than that.'

'Hush, Aggy!' said Mrs. Huntington, sententiously; 'we would have done anything to bring the Woodbine girls into notice; but the Elfintowers being such intimate friends, it devolved upon them to introduce them.'

'I hope there is no brother or father to stand in the way of a needy adventurer of interesting appearance,' said the guardsman, laughing; and at this speech Claire, who had fancied herself in love with him, and who had thrown over Frank for his sake, could no longer conceal her humiliation, and hurried

from the room, to give a vent to her emotion, unseen and unpitied, in her own room. Frank Woodbine did not fulfil his intention of departing for the country the next day. Upon cool reflection, he discovered that it was not the real Claire that he had loved, but a creature of his own creation—a loving, truthful Claire, not the least like the would-be fine lady who had 'thought to win his country heart for pastime ere she went to town;' and he consoled himself with the idea that she was not a girl he would have liked to ask his mother to call daughter, and that it was fortunate for him that she herself had taken the initiative and thrown him over; for he was too manly and too honest to have played her false if she had not so coolly and designedly in the first place rejected him. Many such little comedies as the one described have been enacted in town during the last season: all of course have not ended in the discomfiture of artifice by simplicity, because in most instances artifice stands on its own ground and has the other more or less at its mercy. But it would perhaps be the cause of a family feud or a heart-burning the less, if country welcomes and country hospitalities found some little reflection in town during the season—for we can assure the readers of 'London Society' that Claire and Aggy, wearing out their faded silks, and restoring their faded complexions at a cheap watering-place, will look back with some bitterness to those happy hours spent at Sunnymead during the last autumn; and that Claire in particular, whose attentions the guardsman positively and absolutely declined, after the wished-for introduction to the 'apple-blossoms,' will shed many a tear in secret over the lost affection which now shines in comparison with such a pure and lambent light. There is not one of the party who does not bitterly regret the cool snub offered to those generous and simple-minded and hospitable country cousins.

THE BACHELOR'S THERMOMETER.

AT the age of twenty-five I found myself in possession of a tolerable exterior, some three hundred a year private property, a heavy stick, which ill-natured people called 'a ferocious bludgeon,' and a bull-dog, which they called 'a quarrelsome brute.' Yes! I am bound to admit that he was quarrelsome—to mankind very frequently, to dog-kind nearly always, but to me never. A faithful, attached, submissive animal, who seemed striving, by his zeal in my service, to make amends for those cynical propensities which he betrayed to the world in general—a creature gifted, it must be confessed, with a bad temper, yet with a substratum of latent worth, and a courage of that positive character which, in dark lanes and questionable neighbourhoods, rendered him a most efficient member of the Anti-gratting Association.

Now pray remember, that a knowledge, on your part, of this portion of my property, gives you no right whatever to regard me as 'a dog-fancier.' On the contrary, I am singularly ignorant as to 'points' canine. To my own perception, this specimen was exceedingly ugly, notwithstanding the flattering dictum of stable-minded men, who looked on him with a serious air, as they reflectively sucked a straw, and shook their heads with an imposing gravity, intended to convey their high appreciation of his merits. It was, I suppose, a matter of taste, but I could not see his beauty. The space enclosed by his legs was to me a villainous compound of ellipse, rhomboid, and triangle, the apex of the latter geometrical demonstration being admirably represented by the sympathetic pedal convergence. And then he had that hypertrophied condition of head and neck, which, combined with massive jaws and a zenith-searching nose, go far, I believe, in the opinion of the knowing ones, to constitute evidences of good breeding. He was nearly all white, with a black patch over each eye, and a dirty-looking mark on one side of his mouth—characteristics by no

means contributing to amiability of expression; and, as a summing up of his peculiarities, it must be observed that he had a way of occasionally going on three legs—a tripod style of progression which is, I am told, a great thing in dogs of his nomenclature.

'What a vulgar beginning!' I hear some fair reader say. 'What do we want to know about the man and his dog? Doubtless the master went about in a rough coat with large buttons, and wore his hat on one side—the horrid stick in his hand, and the savage cur at his heels.' Ladies, to the latter clauses of your charge I bow assent, though venturing a protest against the justifiability of your adjectives. I always carried a stick, and my dog always followed me; but to your preliminary indictment I most positively demur. I dressed as a gentleman, and my conduct was, I trust and believe, in accordance.

Well then, how did I become possessed of this apparently objectionable property; and why did I so persistently flourish it in the eyes of the unappreciative world? In the first place, let me say that my three hundred a year was the bequest of a kind-hearted, eccentric old bachelor uncle, who left it in company with the appendages you object to. He said that he felt assured I should care for and respect the daily companions of his walks, when he was no longer on earth to protect them. They were, even beyond the comfortable little income, an evidence of his affectionate feelings towards me, and I did no injustice to the good old man's confidence. Thus it was that I became possessed of three hundred a year, a large, finely-polished, gnarled oak sapling, and a very far from polished specimen of the canine race. 'Still,' you will say, 'why so determined to carry them into society? Why court hostile criticism? Surely you were not, by the clauses of your uncle's will, bound to such a line of conduct?' Well, no; but it was my fancy to continue on the link of the old man's associa-

tions. To be ashamed of his specialities was in some measure to be ashamed of him; and, besides, I gauged my friends by their friendship for these my belongings. If they were cold to me in consequence—well, I didn't care—I rather liked it. To be sure, the dog was for ever getting me into scrapes. He seemed resolved to believe everybody and everything as set in antagonism to his interests, and the consequence was an amount of irascibility which involved me in many annoyances; but I bore it all, and stuck to the creature with a dogged resolution, which did considerable justice to my steadfastness of temperament.

Now, don't make another mistake, and regard me as contented with a single life. On the contrary, I pined for domestic peace. It was the one sweet dream of my early days; but somehow my dog gave me a bad character. I was not looked upon as a marrying man; and, being the victim of a sensitive disposition, I rather withdrew myself from the chances of that consummation which I had mused on even in the time of boyhood.

My occupations were, for the most part, of a literary character, and I frequently indulged in my favourite pastime of fishing. It was while prosecuting a ramble of this kind in North Wales that I received the following letter from my good mother, who had been left a widow in my childhood. In truth I was so young, that I could scarcely recollect my father; but the tenderness and respect with which my only parent hung upon the memories of her married life were among the most beautiful traits of her gentle, loving nature, and proved how happy she must have been, and how happy she had made the path of her best and dearest friend.

Now for my mother's letter.

‘Oxford Square.

‘MY DEAREST CHARLES,

‘How often have I heard you say, that you sigh for domestic peace; and I am sure you know how to attain it. There is no fonder wish of my heart, than to see you fulfilling the duties of home. Well, I have lately made the acquaintance of an old friend of your noble father's. He has lately

come to reside in our neighbourhood, and you will be prepared to hear that he has a daughter. She is certainly handsome and accomplished, and, I think, amiable, but you must form your own conclusions. Come to town and introduce yourself; you will have a cordial greeting. The rest is in the future.

‘One word, my dear boy: don't appear with that stick and dog, which I must say I am very much opposed to as your daily companions. I have great veneration for your good uncle's wishes—still, I think you carry them out to a length not called for. But I won't worry you on this subject, for I know it to be a tender point; only you must remember that your appendages are not quite satisfactory credentials wherewith to gain the favour of a fair lady.

‘The name is Major-General Carston; the address—Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park. I am going to Richmond to-morrow for a few days, but I shall return by the end of the week.

‘Believe me,

‘With much love,

‘Ever your affectionate Mother,

‘HENRIETTA DALTON.’

To which I replied immediately:—

‘MY VERY DEAR MOTHER,

‘Your wish shall be at once respected. I will come and I will call at the general's, heartily trusting that your kind thoughts for my happy future may have a pleasing solution in the result of that acquaintance you desire me to make. Yet, I must say, as a rule I am rather doubtful of an arranged affair of this kind. I should like some accident to be the incentive; yet I promise you I will not harden my heart. But, mother dear, I am obdurate touching the household gods of my bachelorhood; I keep them and show them as thermometers, whereby I test the sincerity of my fellow-men. I won't take them up into the general's drawing room; but I really must take them to his house. So, for having a will of his own on this subject, you must forgive your undutiful, but very affectionate son,

‘CHARLES DALTON.’

Two days after the despatch of this letter I rang the bell of No. —, Gloucester Terrace—my summons bringing into view a fine specimen of the funkey tribe. To my inquiry whether the general was at home he replied in the affirmative, and certainly in a respectful manner; but it was evident that those nervous susceptibilities, so especially the attribute of his race, were painfully excited by the observation of my

oak sapling. There was a melancholy expostulative look about the creature which was quite touching. He was, however, only at the commencement of his trials; the mental equilibrium was to receive a still more painful shock. While ushering me into the hall, he suddenly called out, with a voice of lamentation and cruelly wounded feeling, to a boy in buttons—

'Jawn, 'ow did that 'orrid hanimal get in 'ere? Drive 'im out himmedately!'

I regarded the aggrieved Jeames with a stern air, and informed him that the dog was mine.

Jeames was frightfully taken aback—his very hair seemed to go out of curl, and the powder to fly off, while a perceptible shiver ran through his admirable calves. He was quite upset—what with confusion at his unfortunate mistake, and horror at the impropriety of such an appearance as a bull-dog in the classic domain of flunkeydom.

Begging pardon in a hurried tone, he desired me to ascend the stairs; but I could see that his delicate sensitiveness had been rudely trampled on. He was suffering—I heard him sigh. Really I pitied Jeames!

From the old general I received a very cordial greeting. I liked his heartiness of manner, albeit somewhat tinged with that pomposity which might fairly be ascribed to the habit of command and Indian experience. Miss Carston was a handsome, showy girl, with dark hair and fine eyes; but there was too much self-possession. I read her quickly: a woman decidedly clever, and withal imperious; fond of admiration, and exacting it as her due; with sufficient knowledge of the world to render her perfectly at ease in the presence of a stranger. The eyes shone with a brilliant gleam; they looked straightly into your face; there was no tender, soul-subduing light; and I do not think I was mistaken in regarding her as fully gifted with the powers of sarcasm—at all times a most objectionable weapon in the hands of those who should seek to conquer only by the force of affectionate earnestness. You will at once perceive

that I was not favourably impressed with the lady recommended by my good mother. I had promised her that I would not go prepared to resist the influence of Miss Carston's charms; but there was an uncontrollable conviction within me as to the insufficiency of their power to subdue.

I will not afflict my readers with the details of a morning call; they can easily fill up the conversation from their own experiences of such necessary sacrifices on the altar of custom. This present oblation was not, however, I am bound to say, so dreary as the majority of such offerings; for Miss Carston was certainly an intelligent and accomplished girl.

Several times during my stay with the general and his daughter, I fancied I heard something between a smothered growl, a whine, and a bark, which I strongly suspected were indications of approaching eccentricity on the part of my dog Mommy. The sounds seemed nearer than I could have desired. I judged that the animal had surreptitiously found his way up stairs, and I was not deceived; for, on taking my leave, and the door being opened, in rushed my disreputable associate.

'Oh! mercy on us, where did that hideous creature come from?' said, or rather screamed, Miss Carston. 'I observed a ruffianly-looking man with a sack over his shoulder in the street—the wretch is probably his.' And she rang the bell violently.

Not, of course, with the indignant look which I had directed at the sensitive Jeames, but still with some coldness of manner, I stated the fact of my ownership, at the same time apologizing most freely for the unwarrantable invasion of her drawing-room.

Her acceptance of my explanation was not exactly ungracious, but there was most assuredly no warmth of response. The satire, too, must come—I could see it playing about the corners of her mouth, and presently she said—

'Excuse my asking, Mr. Dalton, why—'

'Why I am seen in company with such an appendage as this, I presume you mean, Miss Carston?'

'I confess that to be what I was about to convey.'

'Well, Miss Carston, my dog is called Mommy—it is an abbreviation of thermometer. I regard him in this light: I keep him as a test of temperature on the part of my friends.'

'I see. Of course I could not be supposed to know that you had any interest in this very peculiar dog; so that must be my excuse for surprise at his sudden appearance.'

'On the part of Mommy, I humbly beg pardon. It certainly was a most improper proceeding.'

'Oh,' replied the lady, 'say nothing more about it. But may I inquire if your regarding this pet of yours as a thermometer does not give evidence of the freezing point being attainable in consequence?'

'Whenever I find such to be the case, I know how to meet it.'

There was a little more bantering of this kind, in which I am bound to admit that Miss Carston shone to advantage; but here again her powers of sarcasm were an effectual bar to those tender feelings which my mother had visioned for me.

In all this little warfare of words I have said nothing with regard to the share of the old general. He appeared vastly amused, and expressed his opinion that the dog was a fine specimen of his class.

So Mommy and I descended to the region of the painfully sensitive Jeames, who seemed to shrink back in apprehension from the very carnivorous look which Mommy directed to the immaculate stockings. The dog was, I am sure, aware that he had been made the subject of conversation far from complimentary, and was quite prepared to resent it. He certainly growled in an ominous way, and I was glad enough to quit the house without a more positive outbreak. I am sure I heard smothered laughter when the door was closed, and I felt convinced that the cruelly-wronged Jeames had been quite aware of Mommy's ascent to the drawing-room, and did not choose to disturb the wishes of the animal. Jeames had been shamefully injured in the finest emotions of his flunkie breast, and he had his revenge in

exposing the author to the criticisms of the higher powers.

On the Friday following my mother returned from Richmond, and, though I could see she was much diverted at this fresh recital of Mommy's eccentricities, she shook her head in a mild, deprecating way.

'Ah, Charles, Charles! there it is again. Why, that unhappy dog is your rock ahead. What infatuation! I wonder you are not tired of the annoyances you receive at his hands.'

'But, my dear mother,' said I, 'I really don't know that they are annoyances. You are acquainted with my theories on the subject.'

'Oh yes, obstinate son of mine, I think I am pretty well conversant with them. But now, seriously, do you really mean to say that you were right in bringing your dog into a sphere where you might be almost sure that he would do you little credit?'

'Well, dear mother, as a question of conventionalities—no; but, taken as a part of my moral position—yes.'

'Ah! your old sophistry! Well, I suppose I must forgive you, on consideration of quick attention to my desire.'

'I fear I'm a very bad boy, and it is true that I have much to put up with from Mommy; but let us hope that he will do something grand by-and-by, to make amends.'

'I hope so too, but confess to be very doubtful. I think you are more likely to get fined, through some outrageous conduct of his.'

'Well, it must be admitted, my precious mother, that I have had to compound more than once for sundry delicate attentions of his to the legs of mankind.'

'I can easily believe that. Oh, you queer boy!'

'Still, I am resolved to be his friend. I say, mother dear, your kind scheming for my matrimonial prospects will not in this case be successful. Miss Carston is not to my taste, without any reference to my vulgar associate.'

'Well, be it as you will; I only wish to see you happy,' said my kind

parent, smiling in her own affectionate way, as I reverentially kissed her fine open forehead.

'Oh, it will come all right some day, dear mother. I see I must go back to Wales and have a little more fishing; so on Monday morning I return: and you must, when you next see the Carstons, make the best excuse you can for your hopeful.'

My journeys by rail were not at all without their excitement. I travelled about a good deal, and I am sure that Mommy was well known at sundry stations. He had the strongest objection to dog-boxes, and his antagonism to railway porters was a peculiar feature in his character. I always felt that I was in some measure bound to 'tip' these unfortunate officials; for unfortunate they certainly were when it became their duty to provide travelling accommodation for my irascible quadruped. When stowed away, his dismal howling was anything but pleasing to a musical ear. I rather fancy he kept it up all through the journey; for whenever the train stopped I heard his vociferations, and the inference I drew was, I think you will say, more than probable.

I was soon engaged in following the course of a beautiful Welsh mountain stream; and one afternoon, after a long and pretty successful spell, I had thrown myself on the grass to enjoy the luxury of rest—Mommy, too, taking a siesta on the edge of the river path. While gazing, now down upon the merry leaping waters, now up to the lofty hill range, behind which the sun was sinking through the blue haze of an evening in May—my chain of many fancies was in a moment interrupted, to make room for a fairer vision. A young lady, book in hand, her attention evidently fully engrossed, came slowly on by the meadow path. Before the distance had been sufficiently abridged to allow a glance at her features, I was struck by the easy, graceful, though stately tread. She was tall, of slight, elegant figure; and, as she came nearer, I was able to recognize a beautiful classic outline, with brown hair, of that enchanting shade which

catches the gleam of the sunlight. But the eyes had the chiefest charm—dark, yet soft and reflective—tender, loving eyes. I could not help watching her, though careful to avoid the slightest evidence of an obtrusive stare. It was clear enough that she did not observe me, and soon I had a more positive confirmation of this; for, unmindful of Mommy's presence in the course she was treading, she came down, much to his astonishment and indignation, upon that worthy's tail. I had no time to prevent it—my attention had been so thoroughly centred upon the fair unknown, that I had no room for other thoughts. But I was up in a moment—and not too quickly; for the anger of Mommy was such, that he at once growled furiously, and sprang upon the lady, catching hold of her dress in his teeth. I could see she was much alarmed, but she forbore any exhibition of screaming. Mommy came in for a kick which sent him flying; and I hastily expressed great concern at the fright she had undergone.

'Oh,' said she, in the sweetest of voices, 'thank you very much! But pray, don't hurt the dog: it was all my fault. Poor thing! I am sure I must have hurt him.'

Dear girl! All the noble nature shining out in this kind speech—my heart was strangely stirred within me. She was somewhat pale from the fright; and, scarcely knowing what I was doing, and every now and then stammering like a boy of eighteen, I walked by her side. It was not long before we reached her mother's pretty cottage. As I lingered unconsciously, she stooped down, and softly, though it seemed rather timidly, patted the ugly head of my generally-shunned animal, saying, 'I hope you'll forgive me.' Bless you, he understood it at once—I never saw him look so amiable. At last I left her, and went home with a tumult of thought that had never before moved the depths of my spirit.

In the morning I called on Mrs. Foster, a nice, kind old lady, who reminded me of my own good mother. Gertrude was an only child. But why need I give a narrative of that which you know must come?

We loved each other—and now Gertrude is my own precious wife.

It is eight years ago since our first meeting. The time is evening. You shall see our 'home circle.' My wife is engaged on some abstruse geometrical divisions, familiarly known by the title of 'cutting out,' my mother, who is on a visit with us, is knitting; and I am writing. On a low stool at the feet of mamma are seated a brother and sister, looking over a book of pictures; while our youngest sprawls on the hearthrug by the side of Mommy—now old and lazy, and upon this occasion enjoying one of his privilege nights. Dalton, junior, is busily employed in the exhilarating amusement of boring his dimpled fist into Mommy's eye; but there is no sign of displeasure—only a slight deprecating movement when the operation becomes a little more energetic than is consistent with the

principles of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Presently I look up from my occupation, and my heart is full of a calm, soul-satisfying, grateful joy. My mother observes my peaceful, reflective look—I know she can read my thoughts—and then I say—

'Mother dear, was Mommy such a very bad dog, after all?'

'Charles, my son,' she replies, smiling in the face of my wife, whom she dearly loves, 'that dog was one of your best friends.'

Then my wife moves to my mother's side, and, as she steals her hand to meet the pressure of a fond husband's clasp, affectionately kisses the kind old lady.

And our two eldest children look up in wonder, for none of us speak; and mamma's beautiful eyes are full of tears.

And we are very, very happy.

OXFORD DOINGS.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'LONDON SOCIETY.'

DEAR SIR,

To-day I feel rather blue,
Ennuyé in fact, and so in lieu
Of something better just now to do,
I've made up my mind to write to you;
And briefly let your readers know
What fell within my observation,
Some six or seven weeks ago,
At Oxford's great commemoration.

On the thirteenth of June ('twas a Saturday),
From New Court, Middle Temple, I got away;
Went out in the midst of a shower of rain,
Hailed a cab at the corner of Chancery Lane,
And the Paddington Station was able to gain
Just in time to catch the 6.30 train.

'The resonant steam eagle'
Onwards, westward, flew,
Stopped at Didcot Junction
To take in one or two;
And soon the spires of Oxford
Flashed suddenly in view.

No sooner had each on the platform got out
Than a Babel of voices was heard all about.
'That hat-box is mine,' cries a voice dictatorial;
'My cousin, Miss Jones, Mr. Johnson of Oriol.'
'How are you, mamma? I've a ticket for Fanny,
For the Brazenose performance, 'twas hard to get any;
But Smith of St. John's had got a good many,
And perhaps I'll be able to smuggle in Annie.'

The 'Brazenose theatricals' that night were to be,
 But the Brazenose theatricals I didn't see,
 For nobody there had a ticket for me;
 And though at the time I did not much care,
 I'm now rather sorry I missed them, I swear;
 For since then I heard a friend who was there
 (Not herself a bad judge of the drama), declare,
 That the acting of all was uncommonly fair,
 And that one or two might not have blushed to compare
 With that wonderful captain, I mean Legardiére,
 Who first drives 'the valets' all into despair;
 Runs his sword through 'the master,' or rather 'Mastäre,'
 And winds up by marrying Bla-aunch De Nevers!

On Sunday there was nothing occurred to amuse ye,
 But all went to church, as of course appeared right;
 And the Bishop of Oxford, and Doctor Pusey,
 Preached, one in the morning, the other at night.

But in the evening after tea,
 All blooming as the red rose—
 Behold each fair ladyè
 By college cousin led, goes
 The promenade to see,
 Within the Christ Church meadows.

It seemed to me as though one of the scenes
 In 'Ida's' College Life were acted there,
 'With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
 And sweet girl-graduates in golden hair!'
 Doctors of Law, and of Divinity,
 Learned Professors, swells in Latinity,
 Men from Christ Church, and Oriel, and Baliol, and Trinity,
 Backwards and forwards by hundreds were walking,
 And each to some sweet girl appeared to be talking.
 Girls of all sorts were there that night,
 Girls in blue and girls in white,
 Girls with dark hair and girls with light,
 Tall and short, and of middle height,
 Bewitching us all with their eyes so bright;
 On my word, my dear sir, 'twas a very fine sight!
 So much for Sunday—

And on the Monday,
 Visitors, residents, freshmen, and dons,
 Who could get tickets went to a concert at John's,
 The only thing worth seeing that day,
 And I can take on myself to say,
 That the singing was uncommonly good in its way,
 And the audience all went delighted away.

Next morning the joy-bells were merrily rung,
 And hundreds of flags in the windows hung,
 Their silken folds to the breezes flung!
 And roses and lilies in garlands strung
 To the houses, as if they grew there, clung.
 And town and gown, and gown and town,
 Shout as if they would pull the old colleges down,
 And, united for once, in loyalty vie,
 As the Prince and the Princess drive down 'the High!'
 To the carriage the people all rush to get nigh;
 And the Volunteers can't keep them back though they try.

* 'The High'—the name given by Oxford men to High Street.

But the royal procession's no sooner pass'd by,
Than to Christ Church quadrangle all instantly fly,
To see each Volunteer, who had hit the bull's eye,
Get a prize from our lovely Princess by-and-by!

This over, we hurry, as fast as may be,
To the theatre called 'The Sheldonian' to see
His Royal Highness receive his Doctor's degree.
The moment I entered there were shouts of 'Who's that?'
From the men who aloft in the gallery sat,
'Take off your hat, sir! off with your HAT!'
My 'tite' I removed at the horrible sound,
Pushed as far as I could in, and then gazed all around.

A thousand Freshmen there
In the upper gallery yelled;
A thousand ladies fair
The lower circle held;
A thousand men below,
Spite of bobbies and of proctors,
Swayed all madly to and fro—
Graduates, masters, doctors!

Two hours we wait for the fun to begin,
'Mid shoving and pushing and clamour and din.

At length the door swings open wide—
Way for our Prince's lovely bride!
But when within the entrance
We saw her face appear,
We gave her one long rapturous cry,
And even the ladies' gallery
Could scarce forbear to cheer!

Immediately after, her husband was seen,
And all of us loudly sang 'God save the Queen!'
Then happened more things than I can tell.
As soon as Lord Derby the riot could quell,
He conferred on the Prince his D. C. L.,
In a neat Latin speech, which he gave very well.
Then followed two odes on *which I'll not dwell*,
And we got out at four by the Christ Church bell.

To St. John's we went next, to see a bazaar,
It was crowded, as such places usually are;
By the angels who held stalls we were cheerfully robbed,
And the Prince and Princess were wofully mobbed.

In the Corn Exchange Hall
That night the Freemasons gave a ball.
From all I can guess
It was a success;
But whether the number was large or was small
I can't say, for I didn't go there at all!

Next day 'what time, the amber morn' (a phrase that's Tennysonian)

Was stealing on towards nine o'clock, I went to 'The Sheldonian.'
Amid the graduates I sat, for hours 'mid noise and clatter,
And shouts of 'Cheers for Jowett,' 'Where is Kingsley?' 'Who's
your hatter?'

At length as on the day before
The noise was hushed, and through the door
The royal couple came once more.

Again 'God save the Queen' was sung,
 And again our cheers through the old walls rung.
 They cheered for Derby and they groaned for Pam,
 And then 'the tumult dwindled to a calm'
 Cairns, Cardwell, Whiteside, and some other swells,
 Came forward and received their D. C. L.'s.

Some Don gives of each a long-winded history,
 While the greater part cheer, and some few a hiss try,
 And Lord Derby asks, 'Placet ne vobis Magistri?'

'Admitto te
 Ad gradum Doctoris,
 In jure Civili,
 Causâ honoris.'

Which, as some of your readers may not of late
 Have brushed up their classics, I'll try and translate.

'Thee I admit of Civil Laws, a
 Doctor,' (this is what he meant);
 'And you get the degree, honoris causâ,'
 That is, by way of a compliment.

Then essay and speech and recitation
 Followed each other in rapid rotation;
 And *somebody* gave us a Latin oration,
 From which *nobody* got much information!
 Till at length 'mid 'Three cheers for the Long Vacation,'
 Lord Derby dismissed the Convocation.

I haven't now time, or might tell of the fête
 In the Worcester Gardens kept up till late,
 And the boats' procession not over till eight,
 Where the Prince and the Princess again we met,
 And the Balliol crew all got an upset,
 But escaped by only being thoroughly wet.

To sum up the whole, the close of all,
 We finished the night with the Christ Church ball.

By those I ween who saw the scene
 'Twill be forgotten never;
 And *some* who were there, I've heard declare,
 'Twill colour their lives for ever!

Whether this be true, I cannot say,
 Not knowing; however, be *that* as it may,
 All night the dancers danced away,
 Till the darkness slowly gave place to day,
 And the lights died out in the morning gray.

One more dance and only one,
 In a long last galop round we spun;
 And the curtain fell on the Oxford fun!

H. M.



THE ENGLISH IN FRANCE.

AT half-past three, or thereabouts, in the afternoon of the twenty-first of June, in a certain modern year of grace, an important and remarkable event happened in the biography of William Elyot, M.A., late of St. Bobas' College, and now professor at a northern university. At that precise date Mr. Elyot fell in love. The day is to be remembered, inasmuch as it was the longest day of the year. The hour is to be known very approximately, for at this very instant he was engaged in looking at his watch. Only approximately, for he had not altered his watch since he had been in Edinburgh—three days ago, and at the moment above mentioned, the bounding steamboat was carrying him along to the coasts of fair France. Latitude and longitude, we know, create their variations in charts and watches. At such a time then did Mr. Elyot fall in love with Alice Darlingford. At such a time his eyes fell on that perfect face, and the destiny of that very impulsive man was sealed. Why has it not come to pass earlier than now, when the vessel is sighting the cliffs of Boulogne? Mr. Elyot, being a learned professor, may have been wrapt in abstruse contemplations respecting Jupiter's satellites. Being also of mortal clay, he may have been consuming chops and sherry in the cabin. I do not pretend to explain the details of this phenomenal occurrence. As a plain man I simply narrate plain facts.

Let there be no mystification. I am not going to write a love story: such would be no business of mine. I am going to write a paper, more or less dry, accurate, and careful, concerning the *English in France*. I shall also use a few facts, not of an unromantic kind, which have come to my knowledge, and I shall permit myself any amount of liberty in respect to *these*. I have at once given my readers the clear facts respecting Mr. Elyot. He was a great scholar who had done great things at the University. He had

lately been promoted to the chair of Moral Philosophy in a northern university. He was perhaps less noted for his acquired learning than for his own rare and original thoughts. His chair was worth six or seven hundred a year, and his own private income was as much. He had lately published a remarkable volume of poems which were exciting a good deal of attention.

We have therefore a good deal, and much to his credit, respecting Mr. Elyot. Colonel Darlingford, however, knew nothing. He answered in rather curt, military phrase, a remark which was promptly addressed by Mr. Elyot to the owner of the young lady with the eyes. Let it not be supposed that this gentleman at all answered the traditional idea of a Professor. He wore no spectacles, and carried no umbrella. His figure showed no traces either of ink or snuff. He was destitute of books and paper. In age he was hardly more than twenty-eight or twenty-nine. In figure he was almost the model of a Hercules. Yet the Colonel put him down at once as a rambling actor, artist, or author. In look, Mr. Elyot was all three; had always associated with such, and could claim either character. He wore a bad hat. He could indeed proudly reflect that he was one of the few men who could afford to wear a bad hat. The bad hat was pertinaciously brushed the wrong way. The shirt-front was partially open to the sea-breeze. His beard and moustache presented the unfavourable aspect of the 'growing' process. In fact, Professor Elyot was in one of what he called his 'transitional' states. That state was a perfect horror of conventionality, and a considerable contempt for civilization. He was very careless in his double right as a man of genius and a man of fortune. It was now that long six months' vacation which Scottish professors have the advantage of enjoying. This being the case, and as he was bending his way to a

foreign part, he appropriately assumed a lawless and vagabond demeanour. This much may account for his unprepossessing exterior, and a certain amount of suspicion and dislike which the stiff Colonel instinctively felt towards him. He had always been an eccentric, a romantic, an imaginative man. This much may account for his falling in love with Alice Darlingford.

The remark which he addressed to the Colonel admitted either of the categorical, or the explanatory answer. The Colonel gave a categorical negative, and moved away to get his traps together. The young, lady, in sweet accent and phrase, supplemented the incomplete reply. The charm of a pretty face is frequently spoiled by the voice. The charm of this pretty face was considerably heightened thereby. It was the melodious voice of a thoroughbred, intelligent, kindhearted lady. The Moral Philosopher moralized and philosophized, how he should improve this acquaintance. The Colonel returning, found Mr. Elyot engaged in framing a sententious remark which smacked of Murray: 'The army at Boulogne, under Napoleon, had intended to invade England, but the English had invaded and taken Boulogne.' Their common destination did not materially raise his fellow-traveller in the Colonel's estimation. Friends of mine, in an enviable, solvent condition, have resided at Boulogne; but this is hardly the common rule.

'True patriots we, for be it understood,
We left our country for our country's good,'

are lines not without some appropriateness for a considerable proportion of that two-thirds of the inhabitants of Boulogne who are made up of English people. The Colonel looked upon the stranger with that suspicion which the inhabitants of Boulogne very generally entertain towards each other. This was very unjust, as the shortness of the sea-passage might equally and adequately explain both their routes. I am told that Boulogne is a great place for scandal and suspicion, and here the *genius*

loei was already active. It is an immense place for gossip, and gossip, as a rule, is not productive of charitable feeling. Neither do the English appear to fraternize very much, or to enjoy much agreeable, general society among themselves. The *odium theologicum* has also been busy of late. A clergyman employed by a religious society has assumed the title of chaplain to the place, which would perhaps more rightly belong to the senior resident clergyman: hence a considerable amount of ill-feeling. I am aware that in all these hasty generalizations about a place some amount of injustice is involved, which, I trust, the well-informed reader will correct for himself. They met repeatedly next day both in the 'high' and the 'low town'—on the jetty, in the fish-market, in the museum, in the cathedral, in front of the monument. Evidently none of these three was to be a permanent denizen of the place. It is the rapid tourist who works industriously through a town, not the inhabitant. The Professor felt it quite in order to address a few remarks to his late fellow-travellers, which were politely enough received. It did not require very much address on his part to ascertain the hotel where they were staying, their names, or the time of their departure for Paris. He discovered that, by a singular coincidence, that was also his own time of departure. He provided himself with a first-class ticket in order to be prepared for all contingencies. Like sensible people, the Colonel and his daughter were travelling in the cool, comfortable, cushioned second class. It was the adroit scheme of Mr. Elyot to take his seat in the same carriage. Now had such a trifling event been a matter of the purest indifference to him; had he been an easy, well-bred, self-occupied stranger, nothing would have been more simple or more natural; but being a nervous man, having romantically chosen to fall in love, being morbidly apprehensive that he was concentrating upon himself a vast deal of attention, which was of course quite

imaginary, he felt conscious, hesitating, and uneasy. A railway station is no place for hesitation. When he had summoned up resolution to walk to their carriage-door, and to say, with an assumption of ease that betrayed his embarrassment, 'I will give myself the pleasure of taking a seat in your carriage,' he encountered a gesture of dissent from the old gentleman, who intimated that all the places were taken.

Unhappily, Elyot's features had no impassibility: they were eloquent in expression, and that expression was dismay. A German gentleman, either because he thought that a party was being separated, or because he was touched by the pathos of the look, or because he divined the state of affairs, or because he preferred a smoke, arose and offered to yield his place to our traveller. He protested against this, but was heartily pleased when he saw the German enter the smoking-saloon, where he vehemently smoked for a hundred miles. The vacant seat was now taken. It did not appear, however, that he was likely to be much of a gainer. The Colonel was soon wrapped in British imperturbability. The young lady read some Tanchnitz edition quietly, or looked out of the window at the scenery. It is impossible, however, for a young lady to be studious, or meditative, or silent for a journey of a hundred and thirty miles. Once or twice some conversation took place which even became animated and prolonged. The Professor was familiar with the ground, and his knowledge of the localities through which they passed made him an interesting and amusing companion.

'You have never been in France before, then?' asked Elyot.

'Only when I was a child,' replied Miss Darlingford. 'My remembrances are very shadowy. I was at school at Tours. I had an aunt living there. Papa was then in India.'

'Tours was quite an English colony then, I suppose?' was the response. 'Indeed it is so still; but not so much as it used to be. People shift their residences much

oftener now travelling is so cheap. But tell me, did you like Tours?'

'As a child I liked it very well. I liked the Loire. I liked to think of poor Goldsmith making the villagers dance to his music as he wandered along its banks. And then the cathedral, and its noble music! The cathedral music which I heard when I was a child seems grander than what I hear now.'

The answer pleased the Professor. He was a man who often amused himself with the analysis of the sentences of a conversation. Of course the remark about the music is simply a common illusion; still the sentence showed a power of vivid recollection, and contained a literary allusion. Its best effect was, however, undoubtedly bestowed on the sweet voice and the sweet eyes.

'Perhaps I should not like Tours so well now: we have no friends left there at present.'

'The society that pleased the little girl,' returned Elyot, 'would scarcely please the young lady: it is of a limited and imperfect kind. Young ladies prefer those capitals from which the denizens of a place like Tours have exiled themselves. English people go to Tours, or Calais, or Rouen, or Boulogne, because provisions are cheap, because education is cheap, because amusements are cheap. Sometimes there are painful reasons why they should not reside at home: sometimes they intend to stay only a short time, and yet stay to spend languid years. Of course I am speaking of those who permanently settle down, not of those who are staying for only a few days, weeks, or months.'

'Do they like their French residences better than old England?'

'For a time they do; but then *nostalgia* comes. Do you know what I mean by *nostalgia*?'

'Perfectly: you mean that desire for home which becomes a positive pain. I understand it, and I have felt it too.'

'I am sorry you should have felt anything painful. For my own part, England is a country which I am always glad to leave, and to which I am always glad to return;

but many of these absentees often feel the keen unhappiness of exile.'

'But they are not exiles, sir: they often like their chains, and prefer the country of their adoption to that of their birth. They have many comforts. They have the services of their own church.'

'It is very true: English chaplains are settled all over the Continent; but none of them have that grey antiquity, that immemorial chasm that belongs to the English Church in city or village.'

'Tours was very well off,' was the reply, 'and various other places are better off than Tours. Some continental places have their most striking associations for us—Lisbon, Rome, Geneva.'

'The service is held in all kinds of places: at Venice, in a decayed palace; at Aix, in a Lutheran church. Sometimes it is conducted in a fortress; sometimes in an hotel; sometimes in a hired room. In France, where there must be some fifty resident English clergy, we are worse off than in any other country.'

'How is that?'

'Look at Paris: the Wesleyans have a very handsome church. The Russian church is a magnificent ornament to the city. The Americans are going to build a new church. Paris, with quantities of English people—'

'How many English do you suppose there are in Paris?' suddenly asked the Colonel, whose imperturbability had subsided into a prolonged nap.

'I believe about twelve thousand,' replied the Professor. 'Among these there must be always a fluctuating population of several thousands.'

'But these are surely not all grand people?'

'No, mademoiselle, nor even middling people. There are many persons engaged in business of very different grades. Then, again, the French are very fond of having the English in their stables, believing them the best people for horses. There are, therefore, a great number of English coachmen, grooms, and cabmen. Again, there are a num-

ber of English employed in the iron-works and gas-works. The Scotch gardener, too, is frequently employed.'

'I am glad that the English are so well appreciated.'

'They are appreciated better than they are liked. Their best writers praise our institutions, and the very *gamins* prefer our fruits. You will soon understand the Anglomania. I do not think the poorer French classes have a very friendly feeling towards us, and are certainly ready enough to cheat. That fine day we had three days ago, the 18th, revives unpleasant memories.'

A pause.

'Do you know Rouen?'

'Scarcely, sir. We passed through once, and stayed at Smith's "Albion Hotel," where I remember we were very unfairly treated. I had only time in the morning, before the train started, to run and see St. Ouen. What a beautiful church it is!'

'In reality one of the finest cathedrals in the world. Its fame would be spread throughout the world if it were only in Paris: that is very deficient in ecclesiastical architecture. There is a large colony of poor English at Rouen, and a few of a wealthier class. The railroad was entirely made by English labourers. The poor fellows have a brewery to brew their own beer. This is their way of keeping true to distant England. The English chaplain officiates both in Rouen and a little way out of it. What a venerable city is Rouen, and, at the same time, so stirring with young and brilliant life!'

'Do you know Normandy well? the watering-places there?'

'Yes: there are several of them along the coast. They are tolerably quiet, such as Fecamp, differing from the fashionable places. Here, when you are tired of cities, you may go down to the quiet coast, introduce yourself to yourself, and cultivate your own better acquaintance.'

Some fitful conversation followed on the subject of French literature. Frequently enough the young lady who chatters French fluently has a

very imperfect acquaintance with French history and literature, and the Englishman who is well posted up in these is a very poor conversationalist. Miss Darlingford spoke the language with great purity, and appeared to be unusually well read, better than most Paris ladies, who seem to think that the age of the classics is gone by, and find even Guizot too dry for them. I do not enter further into this conversation, which was at times conducted with great tact and spirit—one of those rare conversations in which each person is honestly desirous of learning something. It was the old story, 'the way of a man with a maid,' which taxed the wisdom of Solomon in vain to understand.

It was now dark, momentarily growing darker. The gallant Colonel had again sunk into healthful repose.

'Why are you coming to France, Monsieur?' she asked.

'Why are you, Miss Darlingford?'

'Oh! I see you know my name.'

'I know it by heart,' was the response.

A slight laugh. If Mr. Elyot had answered the question accurately, he would have said that, properly speaking, he did not come under the description of the 'English in France': he was only rapidly passing through. To-night he would be at Paris; the night after at Marseilles; the night after on the Mediterranean. But he thought he would have his own question answered first.

'We travel partly for health and partly for amusement. Papa thinks we had better know one country pretty well before we proceed to another. We shall spend some time in France, and shall travel about a great deal.'

'That is exactly my own plan,' was the rejoinder. 'I mean to give myself three months to perfect myself in the language, and see the principal places.'

'Really that will be very nice. We shall probably meet again.'

'What is your line of travel?'

'Oh, just commonplace. We shall go where the English go. If papa were alone, he would take

some pedestrian exercise, or climb the Alps or Pyrenees. I dare say that will be the case with you.'

At this moment the Colonel awoke. Elyot said something to the effect that it might be the pleasantest place, but perhaps not the best for learning the language. Then the conversation flagged. The Colonel showed signs of being both cross and tired. It ought to be observed that there was not a vestige of *coquetterie* about the young lady, but she was, perhaps, a shade more conversational during the slumbers of her commander-in-chief.

They arrived at the station—all bustle, lights, confusion. He proffered his services but they were not required. The young lady made a graceful bow. Her father, in a gruff, business-like tone, sharply wished him good night. He watched them into a *voiture de remise*. It was his intention to take another, and follow them. Another carriage was not to be had. He would walk briskly and keep them in view. He got as far as the Place Vendôme, where there was a multiplicity of carriages in swift motion, and he lost sight of them.

Where had they gone? Most likely to an hotel: if he knew which he would go there also. At the top of the Rue de la Paix he was nearly opposite the Grand Hôtel. He would inquire there if any party answered the description. As it was the biggest hotel, there would be the biggest chance. They were certainly going in that direction. Perhaps they might have turned sharp round and gone to the Hôtel Bristol. No, the Hôtel Bristol was hardly likely. An ambassador or an earl might go there, but hardly an Indian colonel. At the Grand Hôtel he heard that a gentleman, accompanied with a lady who seemed his daughter, had arrived. It seemed a forlorn speculation, but he adopted it in default of a better.

They had left Boulogne by the 5:30 train, which of course arrives in Paris at eleven o'clock. The Boulevards were still gay, the green of the trees contrasting with the lights and the colours of the shops. Merry groups of passers-by, quiet

groups sitting in front of the cafés; in fact, the glorious drawing-room which Paris holds in the open streets on the long summer evenings. There were evidently a great many English in Paris just then. The mother-tongue was recognized ever and anon. Young English ladies, occurred in twos and threes, who were best not in the streets at that time of the night, but whom all this splendour had tempted out, trusting to their own innocence and each other's protection. 'English Spoken'—the equivalent to 'Ici on parle Français'—was on many of the shop-windows; and less happy Englishmen were staying, worn and overworked, till midnight, behind the counters. The Englishmen on the Boulevards were less prepossessing. There were several excursion trains at this time, and Paris was full of them. Many of them had come over with the intention of full enjoyment and freedom from ordinary restraints. This sort of thing is very well understood in Paris; you may see it plentifully caricatured in the shop-windows.

Elyot returned to the Grand Hôtel, wondering whether his friends had fixed their destination there. You may always be sure that at Paris your friends have gone to an hotel, and have not taken apartments. The Parisians do not at all understand that system of furnished lodgings to which we are so accustomed in England. Many English people, when they first come to France, from a confusion of ideas on this subject, expose themselves to much discomfort. It is very rarely that you find rooms with plates, linen, and attendance. If you want these, you must of course go to an hotel. In a private house they will let you an apartment—that is a suite of rooms more or less in number, but you must have your own 'service' and a great variety of necessaries. You may of course also employ the concierge, who in turn is employed to keep a watch upon you, for the French suspiciously think you may possibly decamp. From the obscure lodgings comes the enormous number of hotels, greater in proportion than in any other city. The Grand

Hôtel is an enormous building, in great measure supported by the English, and in still greater measure by the Americans. In travelling, the Englishman generally spends his income; but the American often expends his capital. The hotel is a little town, and has its streets and boulevards. I am afraid Mr. Elyot would vouchsafe it only limited commendation. There is a story that a man died in his room, and was not discovered for a week afterwards. The place is ill ventilated, and large quantities of chloride of lime are used. The charge for the *table d'hôte* dinner is eight francs, which is a great deal too high. For five francs ahead a perfect French dinner ought to be served. French cupidity here defeats itself. The vast semicircular *salle-à-manger*, of the dimensions of a theatre, is only occupied, even in the height of the season, to the extent of one third or one fourth. The dinner is not managed in the best way; the complaint is, that the dishes are served up too cold. One is very much disappointed in the company which in an undue proportion consists of Yankees and of Jews. In fact, with all its grandeur, the Grand Hôtel has a tendency to be vulgar.

The arrivals of the night before proved to be a patriarchal Yankee and his daughter—an elderly young lady of about fifty-nine. Mr. Elyot bore the disappointment as befitted a moral philosopher. He did not fail, within the inmost recesses of his own mind, to resemble a worthy coroner of my acquaintance, who, having perpetrated an extraordinary absurdity, shut himself up in his own room, and, after deep consideration, recorded a verdict of temporary insanity. He certainly felt himself in love with Miss Darlingford, and the feeling was of course exaggerated by the poetical and romantic element in his mind. However, let there be method in his madness. He must try and see something more of her: till he knew her better it would be absurd to declare himself. One plan alone seemed feasible: if she was travelling, let him travel in the same route. If she remained stationary,

let him obtain entrance to the society in which she moved. Exactly. But, before you deal with your animal you must first catch it. Elyot blushed when he remembered the irreverent proverb, and said to himself, that he would go and speak to Dobbs.

Dobbs lived in the Faubourg St. Honoré, a gay bachelor on the *quatrième étage*. If you meet with an Englishman resident in Paris, the chances are, that he either lives in the Faubourg St. Honoré or the Champs Elysées. Dobbs was the correspondent of one of the morning papers. He had lived in Paris these dozen years, and still maintained the bluntness and sincerity of the English character under the polished veil of Parisian manners. He was great in all Anglican matters in France. Him did Elyot discover at his eleven o'clock *déjeuner*. The English in France, be it remarked, with all their patriotism, gradually give up English hours of refection and adopt those of the French. It is always best to conform to the usages of the country in which you are staying. They are usages which experience has proved to be the best for the exigencies of the climate. At the same time, it is noticeable that the French are imbibing from the English a taste for more solid diet than that to which they have hither been accustomed.

'Dobbs,' said Mr. Elyot, when he had refreshed himself with a tumbler of claret, imported direct from Bordeaux, and let me say that Paris claret is, as a rule, indifferent—the best goes to England; 'Dobbs, there is a young woman travelling about France just now whom it is my intention to marry.'

Dobbs had been a great deal among young men—romantic and literary men; indeed, the terms are almost synonymous. He had practically learnt the *nil admirari* doctrine. So he composedly listened to the recital of the adventure.

'You see, my dear fellow,' he concluded, 'I have very scanty data to go upon. They are going to travel about France, and then are going where the English go; that is to say, you have to pick them out of

seventy thousand people, the population of the English in France.

'That is very difficult.'

'Not so difficult, perhaps, as you imagine. The English in France are not scattered without any rule over the country. They are easily classified, and in a classification, certain sets will be soon eliminated.'

'Give me your classification, Dobbs—you were always a generating sort of believer.'

'Practically, not theoretically. In the first place, look at the ports of France; you may be bound that a maritime people like ourselves will be found in the French harbours, Havre, Dieppe, Marseilles, Bordeaux.'

'But these are business people, surely.'

'At Marseilles, exclusively so. Only it is also the great port for Italy and all the coasts of the Mediterranean. The city is now so beautifully adorned, that it is worth while to spend a few days there and examine it. Most tourists do so. Under the imperial system it has undergone a transformation as marvellous as that of Paris: a new cathedral, a new palace, a new exchange, a new harbour, new zoological gardens; and the admirers of Dumas will go and look at the Château d'If. Here is a busy colony of the commercial English; but I suppose no Englishman lives there unless he is compelled. Now, in respect to Havre, the case is different. On a minor scale it combines both the elements of Liverpool and the elements of Brighton. Havre of course implies Honfleur. Still, on a descending scale the case is the same with Dieppe. Have you ever come to Paris by way of Havre or Dieppe?'

'I have tried both; they are two sensible places of France very familiar to all classes of Englishmen.'

'Exactly and Calais too. Well, I do not think that you need trouble yourself about these places, outlets from the Continent. Unless your friends are going out of France immediately, which is most doubtful, or by sea, which is also doubtful, you will not be at all likely to find them in these places.'

'Where are they likely to be?'

Perhaps the old Colonel takes his bottle of port daily. He may probably be a gouty subject, and secrete no end of lithic acid. In that case he will certainly go to Vichy, if health is any object to him. Vichy is about the centre of France, and you don't know where he may radiate from there.

'If the young lady is a medical subject,' continued the correspondent to the 'Daily Gusher,' 'she will go down to the Mediterranean. She will go there even if she is all right. It is the garden of France, and no one can do better than pass a winter there. But, heigho! she can't be there till the winter, or at least the autumn. I don't know how the troubadour withstood the minstrel and the mosquitoes in the summer. But look here, old fellow! she is sure to be in Paris for a few days. No woman ever yet passed through Paris without wanting to stay a bit. Look down the list of arrivals in Galigani's book, and you will have a good chance of seeing them. Go to the Louvre, the Luxembourg, the Tuileries, the operas, the Champs Elysées. You will certainly find them somewhere.'

Mr. Elyot acted upon this advice. The name was not down on Galigani's list, for the Darlingfords were staying out at Auteuil in company with the family of an English judge, at one of the pleasantest of the Parisian boarding-houses. Nevertheless, he caught one or two glimpses of them. Entering the Sainte Chapelle one day with a party, he was tormented with a view of the receding figures of Miss Darlingford and her father, as they left the beautiful chapel, and passed into the hall of the Palais de Justice. Again they casually met in the Louvre. A few words were exchanged. Mr. Elyot asked where they were staying, and the Colonel curtly said they were leaving Paris in a few days—going a great distance. The Professor summoned up courage to ask 'Where?' 'To the south,' said the Colonel. 'To the sea-side,' said the young lady. With this he was obliged to be content.

'Depend upon it, sir,' said his friend the journalist, 'they are going to the Biscay coast. It is a deal too hot for the Mediterranean this time of the year. They have only the Channel left, and they have expressly said they are not going there.'

In the Comedies of Aristophanes, the parabasis occurs in which, while the dramatic action is suspended, the chorus addresses the public in some remarks on things in general. I here permit myself a few remarks on the subject of my countrymen in France. The colonising genius of the English people is great, but perhaps, upon the whole, it is unhappily exhibited in the practice of founding colonies in the peopled regions of the Continent. Many English families in settling abroad appear to start from the aphorism that any country is better than their own country—a sentiment as mistaken as it is unworthy. At the conclusion of the war, the English poured into France, and travelling is certainly to be considered a most valuable kind of education. The reasons, however, which induced people to settle at Paris are now fast ceasing to exist. The place is becoming enormously dear, and dear in those items in which moderate purses are most sensitive. Generally it may be said that the luxuries of life are comparatively cheap in Paris, and the necessities comparatively dear. To keep your horse or to keep your carriage, though one-third dearer now than ten years ago, can still be done at a cheaper rate than in London. A box at the opera is only half the cost. Wine is cheaper, but the wine is not so good. House rent is enormously high. You have to pay eight hundred a year in Paris for the same accommodation for which you would give in London four hundred. Wood is much dearer. Coal is about two pounds a ton. For butchers' meat you pay from one to two francs a pound; the *fillet* two and a half francs. The high prices of Paris are extending to the provincial towns, and France is becoming a very dear country. Brittany is perhaps an exception to this. There you can still live very

cheaply, even where the English are gregarious, and you may live cheaply in almost any country place where you are content to live solitarily. English people who go over to Jersey generally make the run to St. Malo's, and see something of Brittany. There is a regular English colony at Dinan, and it must be admitted that Dinan is exceedingly picturesque. Avranche is a similar place. The English colonies at Versailles and Chantilly may claim splendid sites, but these represent charms that often enough pall upon the resident. St. Germain-en-Laye has the noble terrace which, to the memory of the unhappy James II., recalled Richmond Hill, though the prospect is by no means so rich. Since 1848 it has declined; the disturbances at Paris extended even here. People felt uncomfortable, and went away. I am perfectly certain that for comfort, cleanliness, and economy, an English provincial town is greatly superior to a French provincial town. The education of an English provincial grammar school has a substantial value hardly possessed by a French *lycée*. The ordinary five-franc medical fee is low, but you are now expected at some time to make the doctor a handsome present, which about adjusts the equilibrium. As a rule, a prolonged residence in Paris is not the best thing in the world for young people. A young lady, familiar with the excitements of Paris life, will not very easily settle down into the character of English wife and mother. I am not speaking of special cases, where a man settles down in France in pursuance of some direct path that invites him there: nor yet of the case of invalids who may desire the highest benefit from French mineral waters, from the mild climates of the south, or from the simple fact of travelling. But the system of English people settling down in France because they think too lightly of their own country, or imagine they will procure a better education for their children, and think that their means may go farther, is a mistake, and ought to be condemned. We cer-

tainly pay the French a compliment which they are very far from reciprocating. I have never met with, or heard of any French family settling in England for the pure and simple reason of being in England. Our lot is apportioned us by a higher wisdom than our own, and it would be best for us not to relieve ourselves from the conditions and obligations of our birth, but to make the best of them. There are some British families settled abroad who can speak of their country and her institutions in terms of bitter hostility. It is an evil sign when a man with a cosmopolitan turn of mind determines to do in Paris as the Parisians do; for the Parisians frequently 'do' after a most objectionable kind. An Englishman ought not to be ashamed of his faith, especially now, when a strong persecuting spirit exists against the Protestants; and he ought to be too proud of the English character, which foreigners, with meanest flattery envy, imitate, and admire, to wish for a moment to denationalize himself.

To some extent Professor Elyot had now definitely made up his mind. He made the occasional journey to Bayonne. He was then at once at Biarritz. The place was full. The Empress was there. Elyot turned aside to look at the imperial residence; quiet, of moderate size, built of English brick, which has rendered it a costly affair. There were a great many English at Bayonne. Pau is near at hand, and Pau is a regular colony of the health and pleasure-seeking English. Bayonne and Biarritz are almost together, only six or seven miles apart. It is impossible to conceive a more beautiful country than that which belongs to them. It will not, perhaps, be too bold to prophesy that Biarritz will one day be the most fashionable and prosperous watering-place in Europe. The climate is delightful, and I should think better adapted for invalids than that of Provence. The air is as mild, and at the same time more bracing. Nothing can be more splendid than the view of the Spanish coast and of the Pyrenees. The place is generally full

of Spaniards till the arrival of the Empress and the French court, and then the Spaniards take flight. There is not much boating at Biarritz; the Bay of Biscay is proverbially too rough for anything of the kind. Nevertheless the visitors wellnigh live in the water, the mildness of the temperature preventing any inconvenient results. It was quite on the cards that Professor Elyot might find Alice Darlingford floating on the waves with a gay company of ladies and gentlemen, buoyed up with corks and bladders, trousered, and protected from the heat. Biarritz has generally a great number of English residents. They pass the winter in Pau, and come down to the coast for the summer. Indeed from the contiguity of the mountains all kinds of climates lie within a given compass, and afford a most delightful variety.

Mr. Elyot did not fail to disport himself on the summer waters. He carefully investigated the rocks and caverns of the coast. He partook of the green oysters of Bayonne with approbation, and took some interest in laying down the new beds. Still, before all, he was eager in his quest; but it was fruitless. Determined to make a full investigation of the ground, he took a flying trip to Arcachon. He walked in that noble forest where in the warmest day of summer you may obtain coolness, and in the coldest day of winter you may obtain warmth. The place is admirably adapted either for a summer or a winter residence; the English would probably find it cheaper than at Biarritz. Here Mr. Elyot went fishing, or rather went harpooning, for even the sole is not thought too small a fish for the harpoon. It must be acknowledged that Mr. Elyot enjoyed this nomad existence, and all the better for the spice of romance with which he had managed to invest it. A Saturday Reviewer has laid down the dictum that life is not worth having without a little romance. Without arguing the position, I only say that Mr. Elyot did not fail to nourish that which had fallen to his lot.

He retraced his steps to Bayonne,

and, taking an omnibus, arrived the same evening at Biarritz. He had been absent nearly a week, for he had included in the excursion a flying investigation of Bordeaux, in which we have not had space to follow him. The English flag was waving in token that it had been an excellent vintage, and Mr. Elyot gave a liberal order on the promising look of matters. On his return to his old quarters at the hotel he looked at the names, and there, to his excessive wonderment and joy, he beheld, and could scarcely believe his eyes, 'Colonel and Miss Darlingford.' He made inquiries, and almost hoped to find them in the saloon. He was miserably disappointed. They had gone away the day before yesterday.

Whither had they gone? There was a place in the book of the hotel to indicate the next destination of the traveller. Alas! this was not filled up. His own name was on the next page. Perhaps the Colonel had seen it, and had declined to furnish him with any further information. Perhaps his name might have caused their departure. He wandered about Biarritz in the vague hope of finding some traces. There was a great show of Parisian belles dressed in light summer, gossamer attire, as elegantly as for a drive down the Avenue de l'Impératrice in May. Publicity, and not retirement, is the idea of a French watering-place. Even the villa of the Empress is overlooked, and her Majesty herself may be observed bathing in the water. Mr. Elyot was without any means of identifying any friend of the Darlingfords among his compatriots. He returned to the hotel to make inquiries. A chambermaid was quite positive that she heard the young lady say that they were going on to Pau. A waiter was quite confident that they had taken a conveyance to St. Sebastian. Giving one more glance at the list, Mr. Elyot saw slightly pencilled in a delicate hand, 'Pau,' a tracing so indistinct that it had escaped his notice. To Pau accordingly he determined to go. He was strongly pressed by some friends he had

made, to stay and see the bullfight. This was of course being got up on account of the Empress, but, with that illustrious exception, public taste did not seem strongly in favour of tauromachy. He went on to Pau.

But he found Pau all but empty. On his way he passed through Orthez, famous in the wars of the Black Prince, and, four hundred years later, for the wars of the Iron Duke. To enjoy this country one ought to be familiar with two works, 'The Chronicles of Froissart' and 'The Peninsular War' of Colonel Napier. The climate of Pau is remarkable for peculiar stillness of atmosphere, which has a sedative effect, the opposite of the climate of Nice, which is peculiarly exciting. At the end of March the oaks begin to be in bloom, and at Christmas the leaves are still drooping on the trees. Pau is celebrated as the birthplace of Henry IV. and Bernadotte: each king to regain a crown renounced his religion: the one from a Protestant became a Romanist: the other from a Romanist became a Protestant. Pau has also memories of the saintly Jeanne of Navarre, who in her best days so nobly redeemed the fault of the *Heptameres*. Of all famous terrace views the view from the terrace of the Castle of Pau is perhaps the most famous, terminated in the blue distance by the long sierras of the mountains. The castle, refitted by the care of Louis-Philippe, abounds with historical *souvenirs* of the great Bearnese. Having waited here for five or six days he determined to seek the hills. If he had only waited half an hour longer he would have found them.

Professor Elyot therefore travelled about in the Western Pyrenees. There he would be sure of meeting his countrymen in the various mountain watering-places, though in numbers greatly less than in Switzerland. He was equally certain of not finding them if he followed in the wake of some modern travellers, and explored also the Eastern Pyrenees. He would work up the country and then diverge to Toulouse. By that time the autumn

would be fairly set in. He would then leave the vast plain of Languedoc for the sea-side, and pass along from town to town of the famous shore of Provence. It appeared to him that sooner or later he must meet with them in the Pyrenees. The chances were most decidedly that they were travelling that way. Supposing that he missed them, there would be another decided chance that they would be wintering at Cannes, or Mentone, or Nice, or Hyères. Avoiding all mystery, we may state at once that the Professor had acutely divined the exact state of the case. He had sketched out their very programme. They were, in fact, constantly on each other's trail, and the wonder is that they did not meet earlier than they did. The point that confused Elyot was this: that the Darlingfords did actually deviate from their plan. Alice strongly pressed to keep within it; and it had been arranged that they should proceed to Pau *en route* for Eaux Bonnes, but at the last moment the Colonel decided on 'a dash into Spain' for four or five days, which was accordingly done. Hence it was that for a long time Elyot could find no traces. While they were quietly following in his track he was hunting them from place to place.

A few words on the Pyrenean watering-places will suffice. They are easily reached, the one from the other, and have a common character. A *cul de sac* of trees forces you to retrace your steps. From Pau to Eaux Bonnes is twenty-three miles. It is an ascent along the span of the Pyrenees, along enchanting scenery, by the side of rivers of crystal clearness, fringed by flowering turf, shaded by dark chestnut woods. Then in the trough of the mountains, wedged into the clefts of the rugged rocks, are the watering-places. In these watering-places an astonishing number of people are found who look and really are dreadfully ill; and many others, fresh, gay, and talkative, concerning whom it is difficult to believe that sanitary considerations have drawn them to these heights. In the morning, while the dew is yet fresh on the mountain

lawns, it is customary to take the waters; then come long expeditions, prolonged dinners in which the izard makes a prominent appearance on the bill of fare, music and pleasant talk in the salons at night. From Les Eaux Bonnes to Les Eaux Chaudes is a bridle-path along the foaming Gave, cascades falling from lofty precipices, and the road leaving the river stretches along through the dark pine forest. Let us enumerate a few others of these brunns, buried in ravines and shadowed by the mountains. Cauterets is very famous, and here the mountains nearly meet overhead. There are here twelve springs of water, on which patients repose great faith, with the odour of sulphur and stinking eggs. This is a great place for Spaniards. Retracing your steps to Pierrefitte the grand defile of a mountain gorge takes you to Luz: Luz, where the English have never come in sufficient numbers to spoil the primitive simplicity. The extortions to which we are so familiar in Switzerland are almost unknown here, but would pastoral virtue be able to resist an immigration of tourists? From Luz to Barèges was the next step. The fine tissues so called are not made at Barèges, any more than Stilton cheese is made at Stilton or Damascus blades manufactured at Damascus. They are made at Bagnères, and command a higher price than in London. The waters here are really of the most valuable kind, and the supply is unequal to the demand for them. It is a great place for gun-shot wounds, and the French government has erected here a military hospital. The title of Chief of the Brunnen would probably be conceded to Bagnères de Bigorre, and with this should be coupled Bagnères de Luchon.

The French side of the Pyrenees is less imposingly magnificent than the Spanish side. Owing to the more southern latitude, the line of perpetual snow is higher than in Switzerland. There is a prevailing character of sylvan beauty. And though there is much rugged sublimity, yet this is not the leading feature. Elyot took many excursions

among the mountains. Occasionally an Englishman would accompany him, but he found the Frenchman an unenterprising traveller, who preferred to revive Parisian life in these distant places, and had lazy wonder for the energy and hardihood of the national ally. Occasionally, on his mule or pony, he passed through gorges that reminded him of the *Via Mala*, a gorge that in itself was frequently a *via mala*. Sometimes his path would be over vast, soft, springy meadow land, by the side of brawling rivulets, vast forests stretching around him, forests of the fir, the pine, and the box-tree. Suddenly the rocks would shelve up to a huge, bare, perpendicular height which renders explorations dangerous. It will be remembered how Professor Hardwicke, of Cambridge, lately lost his life in these perilous regions. Elyot even essayed, though unsuccessfully, to climb the sublime Maladetta, loftiest of Pyrenean peaks, which for purposes of complete exploration may well be recommended to a detachment of the Alpine Club. Sometimes in his thoughtful loneliness he would hear amid the mountains those strange and mysterious voices which have so much perplexed men of science—dull, intermittent sounds escaping from the laboratory of nature. Sometimes he would meet the wretched *cagot*, the race held accursed, and wellnigh perished off the face of the earth, through barbarous dislike and persecution. He reached that famous configuration of rocks where a kind of window is opened in the mountains, and, as if in a natural mirror, the land of Spain lay before him in wild repellent tumbled hills. The scenery sometimes assumes a Swiss and Norwegian caste. Those who have read Georges Sand's last work but one, '*L'Homme de Neige*,' that wonderful work of an old lady of sixty-five—written, I trust, in the serene evening of a passion-darkened life—will derive, I think, from those accurate but purely imaginative descriptions—for Georges Sand has never visited those regions—a vivid impression of the sterner portions of Pyrenean scenery. There is a want of

broad spaces of waters, yet he visited such lakes or rather mountain tarns as were accessible, the Lac d'Oo and the Lac de Gaube. This last lake has an unhappy interest belonging to it, from the fact of a young and newly-married pair being drowned in crossing, a few months after their marriage. Such then are the scenes of the lonely wanderings with which Mr. Elyot described the social life of the different brunns. In these active pursuits his healthy frame and his healthy mind were free from any morbid taint of disappointed passion. Wandering about amid these new regions, his brief intercourse with Alice seemed at times only the vivid impression of a dream, and he found himself repeating Shelley's fine lines :

'Lost, lost, for ever lost
In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep
That beautiful shape! Doth the dark gate of
death
Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,
O Sleep?'

No dream from the ivory gate, but the 'sweet human lips and eyes' of the lady of his love greeted him one evening when he returned to his hotel at Luchon, after one of his long rambles to the mountains. It was

now late in the season, and the Darlingfords had arrived at Luchon, and were trying to sketch out a plan to visit Toulouse and proceed to Mentone for the winter. Mr. Elyot heard with concern that, though troubled with no positive illness, the extreme delicacy of Miss Darlingford rendered a residence in balmy Provence desirable. They were almost the only English visitors now left in Luchon; and even the gruff Colonel deigned to hail the *rencontre* with feelings of satisfaction. And now that brief episode of romance which had visited the Professor's learned life, as fitfully it visits for a season the lives of most men, was drawing to a close. He took an early opportunity of mentioning to the Colonel his name and position. He found that the Colonel fully appreciated his position; and, to his infinite delight, that the young lady was very partial to his volume of poetry. He proved of real use in helping them to arrange their plans. He accompanied them to Mentone, and stayed there till the last hour that his winter duties would permit. When he left it was with the full understanding that he should return at Christmas.

APRÈS LE BAL.

(A 'DETREMENTAL'S' REMINISCENCE OF 'THE GUARDS' BALL'.)

SO, *bella mia*, you've made an impression,
And turned half the heads of the critical town;
And tell me the truth now you hear the confession
If not with a smile at least not with a frown.
No wonder your triumph—if radiant beauty,
Enhanced by a toilette the *crème de la crème*,
Could fail to achieve a girl's paramount duty,
To use your own phrase, dear, it *would* be a shame!
You fancied me miles away peacefully reading,
But I saw you, *signora*, and only last night,
In the *deux-temps* with Vivian de Vere you were speeding,
And your gauzy clouds brushed against me in your flight.
The part of a wall-flower I humbly was filling,
And I did not announce myself, for, who could tell,
Perhaps my reception by you had been chilling,
And I wished not to break the old magical spell.
For although I speak in this volatile fashion,
I'm vulgar enough to possess, dear, a heart;
And the sweet dream of deepest, unchangeable passion
From that heart's inward feeling will never depart.

Since the time when your childhood gave tenderest token
Of the virtues and graces that make up your dower,
The chain was linked round me no more to be broken,
My allegiance has never once swerved for an hour!

I saw you whirl by, never thinking or dreaming
I saw you, the loveliest *demoiselle* there;
I watched the rich diamond-spray brilliantly gleaming
And sparkling amid the dark bands of your hair.
In a ball-room, romance, as one justly supposes,
Is quite out of place, still I was so bold,
As to wish those dark tresses entwined with white roses,
The simple white blossoms you loved well of old.

I suppose your lace drapery is of the rarest,
And the broiders that deck it of fabulous worth,
Yet, *ma mignonne*, I think that I held you the fairest!
In your plain country dress with its loveable dearth
Of costly emblazons and ornament golden,
And I worshipped you more in that sweet, simple guise,
When from under the round hat, in days dear and olden,
Flashed forth the soft light of those exquisite eyes!

For you have unchangingly been my one vision
Of happiness seen through the vista of time;
Belgravian *fameurs* may smile in derision,
I care not as long as you see this poor rhyme.
May I say with what hope and what joy I shall cherish
The dream of a future shared, darling, with you?
That dream—that reality never need perish
If but to yourself, love, you only be true.

ARTISTS' NOTES FROM CHOICE PICTURES.

Wilkie's 'Village Holiday.'

A GOOD picture, like good wine, mellows by keeping. Within limits, of course. You may keep your wine or your picture till it has acquired a priceless value for the connoisseur, but be utterly distasteful to the uninitiated. The *Village Festival* is of the kind that keeps well. It is more than half a century old, yet it has as grateful a flavour, its native unexaggerated raciness is as much relished, and its popularity as universal as when it came fresh from the easel.

Though he had been three years occupied upon it, Wilkie was not twenty-six when he gave to the picture the last finishing touches, and sent it forth to win the applause or face the censure of the critics and the public. It achieved a success which might be called surprising as

the work of so young a man, had not the young man, three or four years before, secured the foremost place in his chosen line.

Wilkie has left in his journals a fuller record of the progress of this than of any other of his pictures. Commencing with the first entry, August 3rd, 1808, when, being too ill to keep an appointment, he writes—'To amuse myself, began to make a blot of the *Public-House Door*, the subject I intend to paint next;' he registers, with dry particularity, his daily doings, till he brought it almost to completion. We read how, wishing to give an air of quiet rusticity to the scene, he called on Haydon one fine May morning, and they went together to Paddington 'to look after a public-house that might do for the picture,'



WILKIE'S VILLAGE HOLIDAY.

From "Arthur's Sketch Book of Travels."

When the time when your childhood gave tenderest token
Of the virtues and graces that make up your dowry,
The chain was still sacred unto me to be broken,
My silver-age has never since awaked for an hour!

I saw you, wild by, never thinking or dreaming
I saw you, the loveliest diadem of flowers;
I watched the rich diamond-spray brilliantly gleaming
Ard sparkling amid the dark bands of your hair,
In a ballroom, gorgeous as one justly supposed,
Is parted out of them, but I was so bold,
As to wish those dark tresses encased with white roses,
The simple white blossoms that grow with old.

I suppose I have never gazed at all the world,
But I have gazed at you, and I have seen the world,
For, in my eyes, I think, that I have seen the world,
In your eyes, meeting them with the sweetest death
Of earthly existence and the sweetest pain,
And I remember you, even in that sweet, simple pain,
When from under the moon's last, in days dear and old,
Faded forth the soft light of those exquisite eyes!

For you have unchangedly been my one vision
Of happiness seen through the veil of time;
Dangerous flowers may smile in derision,
I can see no flower so sweet as you, my dear,
But I see it in the world, and I see it in the world,
And I see it in the world, and I see it in the world,
And I see it in the world, and I see it in the world,
And I see it in the world, and I see it in the world.

ARTIST'S NOTES FROM CHOICE PICTURES.

Shirley's "College Bellows."

A GOOD picture, this good wine,
And it is by keeping. Within
trials of nature. You may keep your
wine in your picture till it has ac-
quired a precious value for the con-
noisseur. You may, after the manner
of the ancients, the "Wine of the
East" is the best that comes from
the East. You may, and a century ago,
yet it is in the world, and it is in the world,
the native unchangeable element is so
much refined, and its popularity as
universal as when it came fresh from
the east.

Though he had been three years
engaged upon it, Wilkie was not
satisfied when he gave to the pic-
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Doors, the subject I intend to paint
next," he registers, with dry iron-
ic intensity, his daily changes, till he
brought it almost to completion.
We read here, wishing to give us
an air of quiet readiness to the scene, he
called on Haydon one fine May
morning, and they went together to
Paddington "to look after a public-
house that might do for the picture."



WILKIE'S "VILLAGE HOLIDAY."

[See "Artist's Notes from Choice Pictures"]

and, little as we might expect it, they 'found one that may be of service.' Paddington would be about the last place a painter would go to in search of the pleasant or picturesque now, but it was very different then. Oddly enough we find Lysons, in his account of Paddington, published in the very year that Wilkie went there in search of a rural alehouse, speaking with surprise of its rusticity. Writing of Westbourne Place, he says: 'The situation' is extremely pleasant, and so uncommonly retired, that a person residing there could scarcely conceive himself to be in a parish adjoining that of St. George's, Hanover Square.' Fifty years have passed away, and Paddington, like *Bottom*, has been translated.

Having found his alehouse, Wilkie sets himself to paint with a will. And as he proceeds, he jots down, with almost lawyer-like baldness and unconcern, his daily work; how he 'began by rubbing in all the shadows with umber, and the lights with white, and succeeded in getting in the principal group'—a beginning of which a student of the old school will at once recognize the reality: how he 'tried a new way of proceeding by touching the colour in a much more delicate manner, and produced a good deal of that mellowness which he had so often admired in Sir Joshua'; how 'he began painting at ten; went on with the woman leading away her husband, and put in the group of people paying the pot-girl behind, which occupied him till four'; how 'Haydon came to breakfast and approved of what he had done'; or else, how Haydon, or Callicott, or Segueir, or Sir George Beaumont, disapproved of some particular group, or expression, or colour, or piece of drapery, which he altered accordingly, and generally, for the time at least, fancied he had improved by the alteration: or else, how, failing to produce the effect he intended, he was 'therefore obliged to rub out all he had done these two days,' and so on to the end.

Again, he records the trouble he has had to find a suitable model, male or female, or perchance 'a smock-frock, such as he wanted for

his principal figure'—for he can paint nothing as yet without the actual object before him,—and he does not fail to record when he finds the smock-frock, 'on his way home from town' (he was living at this time in Sol's Row, Hampstead Road) that he 'purchased it for thirteen shillings.' Very seldom do we meet with so jubilant a note as when he has 'hit upon an alteration in the large window and staircase in the background, which has produced a wonderful improvement.' These entries may seem trivial, but how thoroughly they mark the character of the man and the painter; his perfect simplicity and sincerity of purpose; his care even in the smallest details; the veracity which compelled him, as it were, to give only what he himself saw, and felt, and understood, and his openness to conviction: in a word, the healthy tone of quiet enjoyment in his work which is so evident in all his earlier pictures!

The finished picture was not sent to the Academy, though he had just been elected R.A., but formed the leading feature of an exhibition of 'the pictures painted by D. Wilkie, R.A., held 'at 87 Pall Mall: admission, one shilling; catalogues, gratis.' And here an odd accident befel it. The person of whom he hired the room was in arrears with his landlord, and the *Village Holiday*, as it was now called, was distrained for rent. The trouble and vexation of this incident are said to have suggested to Wilkie—always on the look out for a new subject—his capital picture, *Distraining for Rent*; the broker, the lawyer's clerk, and some of the other personages in which are veritable effigies of those who had acted in the like capacities at his own distraint.

It will have been noticed that, at first, Wilkie speaks of his picture as the *Public-House Door*. It was plainly his purpose then to paint some such scene of roystering mirth as might be witnessed any day outside a village inn. As he proceeds, the title is changed to the *Alehouse Door*, perhaps as a shade more polite in sound, for Wilkie was now the favourite of the upper order, and eschewed all such vulgarities as his

Pillensie Fair. Then it becomes the *Village Holiday*, and eventually the *Village Festival*, perhaps from some notion of rivalry or parallelism with the Village Festivals of Teniers or Ostade, of whom he was always thinking. Whatever was the inducement, it was an unlucky change. The *Village Holiday* exactly expresses the character of the scene; festival is far too large and pretentious a word for a few holiday-makers gathered round about a village alehouse.

As the representation of a village holiday, the picture is admirable. It is, however, rather the picture of a reflective observer than a genial carouser, of a gentlemanly note-maker than a participant in the mirth. Teniers and Ostade painted their village festivals and drinking scenes with a sense of enjoyment that is irresistible. They like the fun they set before us, and are not mere reporters of what they saw. If they had not had to paint the scene, they would have been sharers in the merriment. But if Wilkie's picture is deficient, as a whole, in geniality, it is true and just as far as the insight of the painter reaches; admirable in detached groups, and exquisite in individual heads, and, withal, it is needless to add, honestly and excellently painted.

In the woodcut, our artist has brought together the best heads from the different groups. At the top are the half-drunken rustic with the smock-frock, whom Wilkie always speaks of as 'the principal figure,' and his wife, who is trying to drag him away from his riotous companions, from whom he parts with unmistakable reluctance. Detached, the man's head loses something of its character; but on the whole it is the least satisfactory in the admirable group of which it is the centre. Wilkie acknowledged that this head 'puzzled him beyond everything,' and that he 'could not get satisfied with it.' The wife is an exquisite conception. She is still pretty—the outline is handsomer in the sketch than in Wilkie's picture—but her face is worn and anxious, her dress untidy. The village belle has been mated to one who was in his youth

the village beau; but the club-room has proved more attractive than the home, and here are the old signs of a dissipated husband making a slatternly wife. The mischief has as yet only reached the first stage. Alone, his case would seem hopeless; but there is a something in her face that leads us to believe that there are better days in store for both.

The landlord on the left, pouring out ale with the air of one who knows the exact height and the precise angle at which to poise the bottle and manœuvre the glass, is a jolly, ruddy, well-to-do specimen of a host of the olden time. He does not disdain to crack a joke even with these tipsy revellers, to the intense delight of the negro, who roars out his admiration so lustily as to call down upon himself a rebuke from the countryman who is waiting for his ale. The old dame, whose pale sad face contrasts so strikingly with the rubicund visage of the landlord, is, in the picture, standing by the pump, looking mournfully at the sot, her son, who is stretched at length beside the horse-trough.

The head on the extreme right is that of the half-drunken maunderer sitting at the table by the landlord. Liston sat for him, and Wilkie was amazingly puzzled to hit off the right expression. Several times he painted out the head and painted it in again—sometimes trying 'a new expression,' sometimes, at Haydon's suggestion, 'putting a little more drunkenness into the looks.' It is a very characteristic head. Not exactly a portrait of Liston—Wilkie never painted exactly a portrait—but with a look very like what Liston wore sometimes on the stage, and more often, of late years, in private, but lacking that queer turn into which he would, when in rare good-humour, crumple up his unparalleled phiz. The confirmed reckless tippler is in every line of this blowsy sot. As he holds up the bottle to judge of the quality and condition of the liquor he seems ready to troll out—

'Back and side go bare, go bare,
Both hand and foot go cold;
So I stuff my skin brimfull within
Of jolly good ale and old.'

RECOLLECTIONS OF ALMACK'S.

BY A CHAPERON.

THE reminiscences of other ladies of a certain age are, I dare say, like my own, not so fresh as they were some twenty years ago. Like my complexion, my memory has lost its freshness. Ah! formerly I could recollect every dance I danced, and with whom: every new waltz the band played: every compliment the favourite partners of the evening uttered; and these still flicker in my remembrance. But, no, I will not rehearse the flattering hints, rather than assertions, which called up the blushes of my youth. Some, I do remember, laid the delightful varnish of flattery on with a thick coating, so coarse that I shrank from its application. Others, still worse, put it on with a trowel: others just dashed it in with a delicate camel-hair pencil. The appetite of youth for praise is fastidious. I could now stand the trowel, since I feel that I am, if not a wreck—the favourite expression for bygone beauties—at all events only a ruin in a state of restoration.

Let me, however, bring back in fancy those days when the light tendrils of my hair had neither a tinge of gray, nor an invisible reinforcement of false locks among them; when my teeth had never been exhibited to Cartwright's piercing gaze and remorseless hand, and when my complexion needed not the aid of pearl-powder, and could boldly face daylight.

Those were the days of the Regency. I do not intend to be historical, and I write merely as a chaperon who has seen many faces,—many fond ones, come and go, and bloom and fade in those dingy old rooms of Willis's. My recollections have little to do with Courts, but much with that feminine oligarchy to whose decrees the world of fashion then bowed submissively. For the sake of my granddaughters, however, to whom the word 'Almack's' needs an explanation, I will here say a word or two about its first establishment.

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There has never been known a period so conservative in the privileges of rank and birth—so oblivious of those of character, as that of the Prince Regent. I name him thus distinctively as the only royal Regent this country has had. It was in *his* time that the moneyed interests of this country came forward auspiciously, and claimed their due position in the Senate and the regal palace. Boroughs, it is true, were still bought and sold, and no man who was not thoroughly independent could afford to have and to hold a political conscience. Yet the days of conservatism were even then doomed. The country gentleman, heir to a line of stout heroes in top-boots, whose eldest sons had represented the borough of Noodleburgh for some centuries, as a sort of inheritance, was beginning to sleep badly. The shouts at Reform meetings rang in his ears—the word 'disfranchisement' lay at his heart. After-dinner conversations turned upon vested rights, agitation, and democratic speakers; and 'the mob,' 'the rabble,' were referred to with red faces and curling lips. The creed of those gentry consisted, after Church and State, of course, in a thorough respect for game, in a hatred of education for the vulgar, who, if they *were* vulgar, had no right to be anything else; and in a virtuous horror of the three R's—Repeal, Reform, and Retrenchment; and their wives and daughters took up the tone.

Such were the sentiments of those who one may consider to occupy the *entresol* in the mansions of good society, whilst those *au premier* went even a little further.

Women are usually the earliest to take alarm at any changes. Their nature is essentially conservative. The ladies of England were the first to realize the fact that a shadow was creeping over the aristocracy of the land: wealth was eclipsing the peerage. As the hereditary diamonds which blazed on a

L

countess's brow were dimmed by the tiara of a Lady Mayoress, so the social position seemed to be enshrouded in a slight mist, whilst a broader daylight displayed the once modest colouring of the rich, but middle classes—'those sort of people!' as Lady Gentian—poor Lady Gentian, blue and bitter as her floral namesake—used to call them.

In a spirit of self-defence, therefore, was the venerable and now defunct institution of Almack's established. Ranelagh had long been razed and forgotten: Vauxhall was out of fashion: Cremorne existed not: private balls were ruinous: so a certain community of high-bred ladies resolved to concoct a plan which should keep out 'those sort of people!' and include the first-class passengers in this long journey of life, alone, in its scheme. All the porcelain was to be fine, and of unimpeachable fabric, without blemish or crack, in reputation;—fair, too, and gracious, and graceful in exterior—such, in short, as one sees 'in king's houses,' and such alone.

Who can say that these ladies were wrong? Each class has a right to its own peculiar enjoyments, and in its own way. I was once spending a winter near a country town. 'How do you amuse yourself in the dead, cold season?' I asked, whilst a nice, *gentle* young lady from the great millinery establishment of the place was trying on my dress.

A flutter—a smile—a blush—a pin put in too far: 'We dance sometimes,' she replied, fitting on a sleeve.

'Dance! So you've balls?'

'Yes, ma'am—we had last winter; but I am afraid this winter there will be none.'

'Why? What a pity!'

'Yes, ma'am; and a great disappointment' (a sigh: some youth, thought I, rising a mercer and a man, as the *de profundis* of that young heart).

'But the balls became so mixed?'

'Yes, ma'am. There was no drawing a line. We could not exclude buttermen and cheesemong-

gers: that ruined the Slip-Sloperton Town Balls. Butchers and their families,' she pursued, with trembling horror, 'never pretended to ask for tickets; though I must say Mr. and Mrs. Snett are quite independent people. But we couldn't help Mr. and Mrs. Creamly, and the Miss Creamlys—perhaps you know the "Ship," ma'am, in Wool-comber Street?—coming with their foreman; and if we let them in we might let in everybody.'

Ah! true! and so it was with Almack's. Sternly tenacious of its rights, protected by an oligarchy of lofty patronesses, the great design prospered; and those who often knew each other, and who suited each other, enjoyed themselves in those far-famed rooms with a cordon of exclusion around the doors. It was not until after the opera that you left your carriage in the dingy street below, and ascended, treading on a worn-out stair-carpet, to the scene of Almack's revels. The suite of rooms, including a disrobing-room, a card-room, a tea-room, and a ball-room, was well adapted to its purpose. It was the more appreciated because in London houses there is a lamentable deficiency of separate ball-rooms, such as we find in large, aristocratic German capitals, where every lady who gives balls adapts one room in her house, or palace, to that purpose alone; and for that it is kept—rarely inhabited when the carnival is over—swept, and closed, and only cleaned and opened when the carnival comes round again. Then, and then only, are the *Persiennes* thrown open, the *parquet* rubbed and varnished, the gilding carefully cleaned; and the festive assembly takes place in a room not worn, and used up, and faded, and dusty, but fresh, and fit for festive purposes.

Almack's had almost a venerable aspect of decay and of London dirt—a thing *sui generis*, when its lofty and lovely patronesses first swept across its floor. Their diamonds sparkled beneath the blaze of old-fashioned chandeliers: their dresses were contrasted with dusky walls and furniture. The main room was

spacious nevertheless—lofty, and well adapted to the delicious sounds of Weippert's or of Gow's band. It was not too large: you could see everyone, and be seen. If it had not the splendour of modern subscription-rooms at a watering-place, or in some provincial and commercial city, whose opulence and magnificence are unequalled, it had one advantage—that it had not the appearance of a newly got up and dearly paid for institution. Its general aspect was like that of some of its patronesses—medieval. 'Here we are,' said these dusty walls to us, in after days, 'the representatives of many lustrous aristocratic enjoyments: our discoloured ceiling has surmounted many a coroneted head: scions of nobility have been glad to rest their forms against our mouldings: for years we harboured all, or nearly all, the *grandes dames* of our metropolis: our list of visitants was a running peerage: our blooming *parterre* of dancers was never without a sprinkling of dukes: marquises were gay and gorgeous as tiger-lilies in a bed of summer flowers; earls like tulips; viscounts and barons thick like annuals grown up from seeds of last year's scattering; baronets and honourables were as common as weeds.'

And so it was; but so never will it be again. Times are altered; and Almack's in another half-century will be an object not of recollection but of research.

It grew, however, into celebrity at once. Among its earliest patronesses are names still flourishing as green bay trees among us: those, then, of young, and beautiful, and respected matrons full of a lofty consciousness of what their rank entitled to grant and to refuse, but, with one or two well-known exceptions, not disposed to overrate their privileges, or to exclude well-born and well-conducted competitors from the charmed precincts of their rule. At Almack's, it must be avowed, was the haunt, for a long time, of a clique: youth and beauty, rank and fortune, claimed an entrance. 'They are not of us,' was the reply; 'we do not know them.' 'What!' reflected the mothers of these titled

beauties. 'What! those fair girls, with the fresh complexions, come up from the country with the strength of milkmaids! Am I to admit them to make my daughters look pale and worn?' 'Mr. Burly, of Burly, presents his compliments to the Marchioness of —, and requests the favour of tickets for Almack's on the 13th of —.' 'Ridiculous! the man has ten children, I hear, and has been, or is, an ironmaster in some place in Wales.' 'But his eldest son,' whispered a friend, 'is an eldest son—twenty-five thousand a year to begin with. It is not doing justice to the young ladies, my Lady, to refuse him admittance.' 'Very well, let him come. There, I have signed a ticket: write the name. And what is an ironmaster, pray?—a sort of superior blacksmith, or a wholesale ironmonger, or what? Oh! mines! foundries! Dear me! I recollect: Burly of Burly. Are there two of them? Give tickets for two: even a younger son and ten thousand a year would be something. We are so poor, and those sort of people' (with a sigh) 'so rich!'

One of the patronesses, of a gentle nature, is listening—see her, in her rich satin peignoir and delicate lace cap—to a suitor in her boudoir in St. James's Square.

'Your ladyship will do what you like,' a young man was saying: 'of course I submit. The Canterdowns are neighbours of mine, and have led off the ball with every county member for the last ten years. I don't hesitate to say they are the best canvassers at an election I ever knew; but if you do not care to admit them, take your own way.'

It was the handsome heir apparent of that house—the future earl, who pleaded.

'Well, if I *must* have my ball full of bobbin-net and white satin, to please you, and because the dear Secretary for the Colonies—your father's friend, I mean—declares people are talking of a dissolution—How many Canterdowns did you say? Three! It makes me ill. Here's to the three graces. And they'll *all* come, no doubt, with a mother that will stamp the

room,' looking reproachfully at her son. 'I hope they haven't such a thing as a father, you wretch!'

'And why not? There, write their names;' and she fills up, 'Mrs. Canterdown, Miss Eleanora, Miss Sabrina, Miss Imogen Canterdown.' 'Thank you.'

'Oh, my dear! don't you know one might mistake a mother and her daughters, looking, as dear Byron says,

'A mother, with her daughters and her nieces,
Look like a guinea and seven-shilling pieces;'

but a father, with his broad shoulders and double white cravat, with his "My Lord's" and "My Lady's," and a son, — a young assuming man, full of vulgarity and assurance, will always betray the women. I mean nothing improper. Go, dear Fribbleton, and remember this is the last time I give your people tickets.'

'I won't promise, my dear lady. Remember the state of affairs.'

'Ah! that odious Reform Bill; it will ruin the country, and Almack's!' cried the countess, signing her name in a large, scrawling hand, which those who best knew her understood well. It denoted great wrath.

Away goes Lord Fribbleton to his country friends. Those were the days of cabriolets, of white reins, and *perle-gris* gloves. We are all for muscularity, for undress now: then the most exquisite appliances to the outer man were essential: rich satin ties; richer waistcoats; coats of super-superfine cloth; hats of the most undoubted and finest beaver; rings, and pins, and then studs, and watch-seals, delicious, — were *de rigueur*. The Petersham school had scarcely gone out: the D'Orsay school was coming in. Away drives Lord Fribbleton in his cabriolet, with his spanking horse treading, as his groom remarks, 'like a hemperor,' and drives till he stops at the door of a good solid family hotel in Albemarle Street. Large faces peep out from the drawing-room window: the visages of the three Miss Canterdowns, old young ladies who had been the fast leaders of *ton* in their

own country set, appear, and Lord Fribbleton shuddered as he saw them; he leaves his card and the tickets, looks bewitching, and, feeling that he had done a day's work of duty, bows, and hurries onwards. Other anecdotes were current in those days, that a certain viscountess, a lady patroness, was under the influence of her lady's-maid, and that a *douceur* to that functionary might smooth objections and procure tickets. There is no answering for one's best friend: — at all events people *did* creep in whose presence was never calculated upon by the more rigid of the patronesses; and the deterioration which afterwards took place was ascribed to political motives and to the lady *canaille* of electioneering constituents. It was in the decline of the Petersham rule that Almack's rose, and when D'Orsay fled to Paris that it sank. Not that the two events had anything to do with each other. It was by women's influence that Almack's originated: by women's influence that it became imperial in fashion: by women's mistakes, in fact, that it fell. Lord Petersham, latterly known as the Earl of Harrington, might be seen in those famous assemblies in his cutaway, silk-lined tail-coat; his four inches of waistcoat; his exquisite cambric frill; his rare ornaments of jewels, in which he delighted, wearing rings even on his thumbs as well as his fingers: his polished pumps might be seen on those chalked floors; his white kid gloves touch with gentle grace the tips of a duchess's finger; his studied bow, his perfect address he, for a time, admired and imitated, for he indeed was worthy of the Court of Louis XIV. of France than of that of our homely George III.; but his presence or his absence could very faintly affect the stability of such a *puissance* as that of Almack's: then he married, and was undone — undone, I mean, as a *parti*, and as a target for dowagers' aims, to shoot at; and presently he vanishes from fashion's sphere, and is 'lost to sight,' without being particularly 'dear to memory.'

He was the type and model of one

generation of young Englishmen, as D'Orsay was of another. I see them before me as I recall the bright days of Almack's.

Lord Petersham, all admit, was a man of taste, cultivation, and high breeding. He delighted society by the perfect refinement which suffered no individual, even the most insignificant, to remember, when in his society, that he was himself anything more than simply a gentleman. Count D'Orsay was the joyous and loquacious well-bred Frenchman; and, as the pale, aristocratic visage of Lord Petersham began to assume the peculiar attributes of middle age, the florid, somewhat round, not unmanly, yet not essentially masculine face of D'Orsay was beheld, transiently, at Almack's. I say transiently, for associations were ultimately formed which drew D'Orsay into another clique; and ultimately, his fine talents, his endless *bonhomie*, his careless, generous nature, his ingenuity, and lastly, not least, his almost matchless personal attractions, were confined to one sphere in which he was loved, and ruined. Those who knew him attest that, without much deep feeling, without an atom of principle, or without even depth of reflection, or earnestness of character in any one point, he was immensely dear to all his intimates, simply from manner—not the artificial manner of Lord Petersham, but the apparently buoyant, rapid ways of a Frenchman, who, one might suppose, was as great a stranger to sorrow and difficulty as to sentiment. And, indeed, just to finish off and to dismiss this remarkable person, on whose career we offer no comment; he was, it appears, gay, invariably good-tempered, beloved by the few friends spared to him, to his last hours. Even when at Dieppe, in poor lodgings,—in privation, not to say want; deserted by his Imperial friend, so long an inmate at Gore House, bereft of her, who was his destiny—the spirits which had formerly blazed out at Almack's were never extinct until death had hushed his voice for ever. Sinking under a mortal disease, he was still elastic

and hopeful, and apparently light-hearted; and so, smiling at death, he passed away.

These two men were the stars of those nights. They were constellations of more beauty, and more real and intrinsic interest in those rooms at Willis's. And let us take a view of them through the mist of years. Presume we to glance at the planets of the sphere—the stately patronesses. They were then in their prime. Lady T—y, inscrutably at the head of fashion; the Marchioness of A—y, fair, like the belles of Charles the Second's Court, but fitted in virtue and propriety to belong to that of Queen Victoria; and Lady P—n. These were among the most notable of the ticket-giving female deities, and these still preside over the highest cliques of fashionable life.

Then the journals of the day still raved about the fair 'Cavendishes,' the daughters of Lord W—R—. They bloomed, and faded into middle age. A lovelier *groupe* succeeded; one after one came forth the rare beauties of that Villiers' line, renowned for personal gifts. First, she, perhaps the rarest of these rare sisters, transplanted, at an early, a too early age, to the cold climes of Austria. Heralds, in that country of etiquette, wrangled over her descent: in the list of her ancestry appeared a banker's name; the family hesitated—scrupled—even almost refused; and the worthy defunct founder of the fortune of this noble English house was pointed at as a stumbling-block, though then dead as Julius Cæsar. The obstacle was removed, and the sweet sacrifice was exhibited in a foreign Court. She bloomed there, was victorious, respected, and yet, a *grande dame*. Was she happy there? Happy in that gay, vicious capital, bearing one of its proudest names? Happy in her family summer residence, that castle, grand, but half furnished, full of state, but destitute of comfort—happy with her next to Imperial state; her guard of honour, and her place, almost nearest to royalty at Court? We know not: this we do know, she came home to die.

'She, my white rose, dropping off
The high rose-tree branch! and not
That the night wind blew too rough,
Or the noon sun burnt too hot,
But, that being a rose,—'twas enough!'

Unconscious of her fixed and fatal malady, she passed to a sphere congenial to her gentle and pure nature. The fair flower of Almack's was gathered ere it had quite faded.

Next came a sister, of a still more elevated beauty. Certainly, if anything of human mould is ever perfect, this specimen was perfect. Even though on her brow the seal of early doom was set when last we beheld her, with the wreath of violets round her head, the touch here and there of the last traces of mourning for a brother, who preceded her by some years to the tomb—even then, here was a matchless being. The true oval of the English face, long, somewhat—the delicately aquiline nose, the soft deep eyes, with those dark, sweeping lashes—the mouth of such excellent a turn, that, even in repose, it seemed to smile involuntarily; these were the points which first struck the fancy as you gazed on her whose name has become a proverb in our land, for loveliness. Then the long—not flaxen, yet not chestnut hair, that in glossy ringlets shaded the ivory throat, and touched the faultless shoulder; how graceful, how *English* it was! How few styles of hair-dressing can, if we allow for the different ideas of fashion, approach it now!

Somehow, a secret sorrow seemed settled on that lofty, marble brow; a pensive rather than a sad frame of mind, to be stamped on that never-to-be-forgotten face. Her history—but we will not meddle with it—Sacred be the mystery which was blended with her existence! Almost imperceptibly, she, too, faded away; and the common belief that never was there a face so fair, a form so matchless; and the engravings, which are still popular in our print-shops, are all that the public hold as memorials of their sometime idol.

But let us not hang a cypress wreath over our ball door. Call up

• E. Barrett Browning's last poems.

rather the gaieties and frivolities of the past. It is twelve o'clock; the opera is nearly over—my *débutantes* are promised for a quadrille, for a waltz, for a galop.

We hasten to the scene of action. We are late—one of the last galops danced, or rather flown, by the then Lady E——h, with the Prince S——, is just over. The patronesses are looking grave; the prince still graver: that thralldom had begun which he so soon threw off, when the scandal, and the flight, and the excitement were over. He is no more: *she* lives—and were it not that all her history is a matter of notoriety, and has been, over and over again, told us in foreign and English newspapers, I should not even glance at it.

It is well known how soon the graceful, able, but ever sombre Prince S—— separated from her whom he carried off from the gayest sphere in London; and how she was received at a certain German Court, not then celebrated for its discretion or its purity. Here, a foreign title covered, but did not obliterate, the name Lady E——h had dishonoured. Here a young nobleman of that far-off land fell in love with her, and made her honourable proposals. 'Do not,' she answered, 'ask me to marry you; I have no vocation for marriage.' Yet he persevered. 'You know all,' she urged; 'dare you tempt your destiny?' He followed her to Italy. He was still resolved. 'I shall make you wretched,' she urged; yet she yielded; they were married; and any one might have loved the handsome, enamoured Baron Ph——n. She bore him a daughter. Yet a certain Greek diplomat carried off that shallow semblance of a heart that was left to Lady E——h. Before, however, her *last* fall, she ventured to pay a visit to the wife of the nobleman, then minister at the Court of B——. She was announced as *La Baronne* Ph——n. With infinite tact the Lady Ambassador received her; spoke to her in French; talked of public places, and picture-galleries; ignored her former name, and suppressed all allusions to her being English. It was as the *Baronne*

Ph—n that she was admitted, and not as Lady E—h; and then the acquaintance ceased.

Lady E—h eloped with the Greek. The Baron Ph—n pursued the pair; fought with the young miscreant and almost killed him; then with a noble compassion—for it was in one of the wildest regions of Southern Germany that this occurred—took his foe into his own castle, the only house near, and had his wounds attended to. The Greek recovered, but at the end of six weeks disappeared. He had eloped, a second time, with Lady E—h.

Those who wished to see the heroine of this fearful tale, might have traced, in features still handsome, the once bright ornament of Almack's, at, we are sorry to say, the late capital and Court of Otho, King of Greece. Retribution followed, in a terrible, terrible form. Let us not pursue them. Return we to Almack's. See, the company are entering the refreshment-room; and the musicians are resting.

Do not expect, young *débutantes*, to see a splendid supper set out. The highest society in London affords an example of the greatest simplicity: tea and bread and butter are placed in profusion upon the long tables—nothing more. Wisely have the patronesses copied their programme from that of foreign *réunions*, where one danced all night upon *morues glacées* and *oranges glacées* before the introduction of tea, and where now tea, ice perhaps, *eau sucrée*, and lemonade are still the only refreshments. And, in our country of late dinners, who wants more than tea and bread and butter? Certainly not at Almack's, where every one went late; and thus a well-selected, well-conducted, and innocent recreation was insured at a moderate cost. To non-subscribers the tickets were half a guinea each.

Nothing was ever more acceptable nor more enjoyable than that tea. There, smiling, full of happiness, lovely, yet not of an elevated style of beauty, were the young Lady Emily, and, afterwards, Lady Fanny C—, and their mother, still looking like their elder sister. Good as they

were attractive, gentle, gracious, beloved, admired, they have been spared to show that high spirits and high fashion do not necessarily imply frivolity, nor produce a forgetfulness of the actual duties of life.

Near that doorway stands the beautiful Miss B—gs. The one slight, somewhat tall, with an oval face of rare symmetry, a faultless figure; the other shorter, plumper, her sweet face of a more roseate hue—a very Hebe, in that wreath of white roses round her auburn hair. Beauty, not rank, has raised these northern belles to their pre-eminence in the world of fashion, and that sort of beauty which is gentle, pure, modest, and fresh; for the *fast* young lady was a monstrosity unknown at the era of which we write in Almack's. Ours was not then, as it has since nearly become, the country of the Amazons. Hunting damsels were known only in books; we had few Di Vernons; those we heard of were considered as remarkable specimens, not as the accepted members of a class. Scandal there was, and scandal there ever will be; but in Almack's you must look for the source—it did not obtrude itself; and the audacious *exposé* of Lady E—h must not be taken as an indication of the general demeanour of the assembly.

Yet dark shadows passed across the brilliant scene. There walks a peer, in wit and accomplishments equal to the far-famed Comte St. Germain in the time of Louis XV., in manner irresistible; yet is he not endowed with eminent personal attractions. The wax lights display his red hair and whiskers as he vanishes into the card-room. Even there an inquest is sitting upon his honour—the honour of an ancient, brave, and hitherto unstained ancestry. The inquisition turns on the minutest facts; every one knows the truth, yet every one dreads and deprecates the exposure. That is his last night *there*—at Almack's. In a week all is over—he shrinks from public gaze—he retires to a home where, haunted by the past, his days are soon ended—a mind, intended for better things, is wrecked, and for ever!

And the gamster dies in obscurity, and utter alienation from all whom he had once loved! The time was when the pennon of his ancestors had been known in the battle-field, their motto in the tourney, their *panache* in the barriers. And now—but let us close the hateful topic, rejoicing that the fearless exposure, and the avoidance that ensued, have for ever annihilated the dishonour. The mischief and the misery of that celebrated delinquency has occurred no more amongst us.

In yonder corner of the tea-room, in shadow, stands a short, dark-complexioned man, whose eyes are scarcely ever raised from the ground to rest upon even the fairest faces; yet is he one who, in that drear yet impassioned youth of disappointment and difficulty, ardently admires beauty. No one would suspect it. It is true the hair on that straight brow is still brown, and thick, and glossy; and he, who has passed through a lifetime of adventures, is then scarcely thirty; yet youth was hardly even then one of his attributes. His small, narrow, grey eyes have none of its vivacity; his cheek, embrowned, not pale, none of its freshness. He stoops somewhat, and a heavy look of care depresses his physiognomy.

Yet is it care? or is it policy that wears such an aspect of apathy, and that indicates to the superficial observer such an absence of intelligence? Believe me, in that man—the brightest intellect of his time on a throne—the vast powers of his great intelligence are veiled by a coverture of indifference. He is playing a part. No one suspects the hidden fire, that scarcely ever fumes in the presence of observers. By that man of silence and reserve great designs are cherished, great wrongs are remembered—hopes never abandoned are smothered—and for these is the mask worn. Beneath it is a moral volcano. I watched him dancing. He who leads out in that *salle des maréchaux* the fair Spanish girl—that night when, by placing on her hand a white flower, he announced to her his imperial destiny—dances advisedly. On horseback

he shines more than he did of yore in the ball-room of Almack's. The hero, or victim—as you will—of that terrible duodecimo, 'Les Châtiments,' turns, and waltzes with precision—steadily, but not gracefully—and still the face is lowered; the eyes are never raised to those of his partner; he dances as a man who has been taught, but to whom dancing does not come naturally. I have seen him dance since. Now, the step is more measured still—performed almost with difficulty; yet it was never like the step of a young dancer, even when the dancer was in his prime.

'It is the Prince Louis Napoleon,' I observed to a friend by my side. 'I saw him the other day at Lord Eglintoun's practising—caricooling on a matchless courser, performing feats of horsemanship, at which some—'

'Laughed,' interrupted my neighbour. 'He made himself ridiculous. He is quite *de mauvais ton*. No one ever notices Louis Napoleon.'

'No one knows him,' I rejoined. 'No one comprehends the enigma of his character. Some say he is the shrewdest man alive, others hold a different opinion.'

'That he is one of the stupidest; and, depend upon it, the common opinion is usually just. He is a man of no talent—or he would not be here.'

My friend turned away, and, forgetting two beings so insignificant as myself and—Louis Napoleon, prepared to mingle in a cloud of dowagers. He turned back. 'His cousin,' he whispered, 'I grant you, is a better specimen—a handsome, accessible fellow,' and he pointed to a good-looking youth with all the Buonaparte attributes strongly on his face. 'He, I allow, may be *somebody*.' Thus spoke he of 'Plon Plon.'

Such was the received opinion. The intellect thus misjudged was a mine of wealth, which he, who built upon his treasure-hopes of future ascendancy, carefully hid—leaving it for one who had a secondary part to play in life to achieve popularity. What a whirlwind has not the existence of that stolid, and then gloomy-looking young man been

since those days at Almack's! Boulogne, and the tragedy of Bedingnet; that dark phantom of the imperial conscience—Strasburg; Ham, where the caged eagle sharpened his vision, and strengthened his talons, and prepared his wings, by a long apprenticeship to study—and, more serene, but not less monotonous, the retreat of Arensburg, where the once beautiful Hortense, the ex-queen of Holland, was often so reduced in circumstances that she and her maids of honour were obliged sometimes to dine on an omelet:—these scenes succeeded the brief period of halcyon days in Hyde Park, at Ascot, and at Almack's. What a preparation for glory is early adversity! Out of neglect, avoidance, even insult, rose the vast energies of him who now, as we recall Almack's to memory, figures before us. We see him, in recollection, silently, without any smile, bow, and set down his partner after the last waltz.

When at Arensburg, the great emperor, then an abjured refugee, called on a neighbour—that is, a neighbour on the opposite side of Lake Custance, but still the nearest neighbour of the Duchesse de Saint Leu and her sire. It was a grand old German castle, flanked and fortified without by strong walls and bastions—still more flanked and fortified within by pedigrees, etiquettes, and all the proprieties.

Our prince, galloping up to the gateway, sends in his card. It is given by the Suabian *chasseur à mon Baron* in his library. The stately old gentleman starts up in fury:—'How dares he call on me?' he exclaims—'you upstart incendiary! Take his card back.' A young English lady sitting near—for she was on a visit to this baron with his sixteen quarterings and pure blood—intercepts the card. 'As a curiosity,' smiling, she says, 'let me have it;' and as a curiosity she retains it. It is something to have the card given by a hand destined to empire, and returned by an old German re-cluse, living no one beyond his own drear world knows where, and gone, probably, long since this event, to his fathers with their sixteen quarterings.

Sometimes real, actual royalty, under a *nom de guerre*, has shown itself in the magic circle of Almack's. Witness the incognito visit to England, in the first year of our Victoria's reign, made by the King of Bavaria—Maximilian. Our matter-of-fact nation will never comprehend that the clever, eccentric King Ludwig is no longer on the throne. At the mention of the King of Bavaria, a vision of Lola Montes rises up, and a mist of improprieties obscures the mental vision of British listeners, who smile expressively.

Bless me! what a hurry of spirits agitates those diamond-crowned lady patronesses, when they hear that the thin, dark young man, with black straight hair, a regular and somewhat wooden contour of face, with a star only on his well-padded chest, is the King of Bavaria *de facto*, though to the assembly only Count Werdenfels! Ladies, be not alarmed; your characters are not endangered. 'Manx,' as the Germans call him, is a young bachelor on his preferment. The shorter, dark-haired, gentlemanly man at his side is the Vicomte de Vaublanc, the nephew of the minister of Charles X., and the friend and gentleman of the bedchamber of King Max.

And a more accomplished couple than the young prince and his companion have rarely visited Almack's. Guizot has pronounced the present King of Bavaria to be one of the most erudite monarchs in Europe (perhaps that is not saying much). Mons. De Vaublanc is an antiquary, an author, an artist—a man gay and witty, but reflective and laborious.

Quietly these strangers circulate through the room. But it is whispered that the King has had a private interview with our young Queen—not with matrimonial views,—for that difference of faith renders impossible—but for compliment and curiosity. The interview was constrained, for both spoke French, and both, it is said, would have been more at home either in German or even in English. And the prince was then on his way to Prussia, whose laws did not forbid his marrying one of the daughters of that Protestant house—a sweet

and lovely young princess, the ornament, if not the happiness of his now royal home.

Ah! those were halcyon days both to the King of Bavaria and to her who now mourns a life-long loss and sorrow. Young, a great admirer of beauty, with a stiff manner, but a romantic fancy, Max, it is known, cherished a sort of enthusiastic admiration for the girlish ruler of Great Britain. He always speaks of his interview, as of his visit to London, with great delight. Prosperous as a monarch, ill health has since marred his felicity; hers, alas! has had its days of blossom; and now, even ere she has scarce attained middle age, the sere and yellow leaves have fallen around her path. Where can she avoid them? They strew the garden walks of Osborne; they gather in the slopes of Windsor; they fly before the blasts of the northern gales of Balmoral. Where, indeed, can we leave sorrow behind us?

'This glassy wave, that spreading pine,
Those alders quivering to the breeze,
Might soothe a soul less sad than mine,
And please, if anything could please.'

But a truce to murmuring. As I stand near the doorway of the ball-room, and see the last steps of a quadrille danced out, and the final bow and curtsy performed, and then in a minute the music stops, and the musicians begin hurriedly to quit their places, and to put away their instruments, my memory—a long memory—reverts to dancing, as I knew it in my youth, as I see it in my maturity, and, to come to the present time, as I behold it in my old age.

I recall it in rooms far away from the so-called Willis's; country assemblies—compared to the exclusiveness of which Almack's was a perfectly open society; beneath old smoke-covered chandeliers; on floors bad enough to make your feet, as well as your heart, ache; in rooms, one end of which, constructed with folding doors, is opened on this gala night, but closed by day to make two apartments, the one for society, the other for furniture to feed and

redolent of the weed, the other, if not pure, purer. And here sit the lord-lieutenant of the county, and his lady, maybe; or the M.P. for the borough, smiling and gracious, and dancing with everybody; or the ancient commoner, whose family seat, built, like himself, clumsily, and not, we hope, for posterity, just arises above yon wood, which, if you look out of the festive scene, into the moonlight, you may see—presently.

Quadrilles had struggled into existence ere Almack's became Almack's; they were, at first, regarded as a heresy. A great deal of romping and happiness, a great deal of flirtation went on with country dances. What a list of pleasures used to be laid out for each evening!—hands across and four-round, poussette and allemand, down the middle and back again; then came the complicated figure of Monymusk, and of the college hornpipe—wherefore so called one cannot divine, for no people surely are so little likely to dance a hornpipe as the fellows of a college. Then there was the Boulanger, a dance including numbers, with a great deal of turning, and twisting, and holding up arms, and a sort of threading the needle that produced much laughter—whence derived I know not; except it may chance to be from *La Boulangerie*, a rondo danced in the north of France, and sung also to words more piquant than proper. Lastly came Sir Roger de Coverley, the only good thing among this list of delights which we attempt to retain.

Quadrilles came—Paine's first set, I remember they were called. It was ages before country gentlemen could learn them; and when they did, who was the footsore man who dared to show his steps in that fearful pas seul in '*La Pastorale*.' Shade of Oscar Byrne! I have known some of my pupils immolate their reputation in that fatal stake. But the lists are closed now to good dances. The necessity for male prowess exists no longer. To walk the square in time, to shake one's foot in time, to carry oneself well,

somebody, are all the requisites of a cavalier in these enlightened days. Steps and pirouettes, balancées and assemblées, rigadoons and chassés, —these have gone out with many abuses—with duels and damages for crim. con., with silk stockings and pumps, embroidered waistcoats and shorts, and I know not what other absurdities.

By degrees the quadrille became a stereotyped process. Paine's quadrilles consisted at first of five distinct figures: there was *La Poule* and *La Trenise*, *La Pastorale* and *L'Été*, and a grand conclusion—all vanished now into thin air. It was necessary, when the balls at Almack's began, to go through the whole set, and learn a code of steps consistent with each. And there was a long preparatory training, with great loss of temper, and loss of fiddle-strings on the part of the teachers—when, lo! a revolution in men and manners! the waltz was introduced. Modestly, at first, did young men and maidens, who had scarcely so much as shaken hands, come into contact tender enough for affianced lovers. Deeply did virtuous matrons blush, whilst worthy fathers looked in from the card-room with horror on their roseate faces; but being assured that all was right, and that my Lady Sophy Lindamell had waltzed away, first of all with Captain Cutbush, went back again with an air of resignation to their long whist. It is very long since matrons have ceased to blush when they see their young daughters carried off in the whirl of some human tectotum. They blush only, and with resentment too, when their blooming daughters are suffered to sit still.

The waltz, fixed by fate, as it would seem to be, has had its variations. When first introduced, it was a *trois temps*, danced with a slow, sinking step; the left hand of the lady was rested on the upper part of her partner's right arm; it is now

placed on his shoulder. The other two hands, conjoined, were held out and aloft, looking like a handle, and the further extended the better; they are now lowered, and the step is a *deux temps*—rapid as human will can make it. Then the shocking, vulgar, jerking polka was an introduction which seemed to herald in the downfall of Almack's.

Such was the dancing: now for the dressing. Does any one remember the giraffe bows of the hair worn simultaneously with short waists, in the olden times of Almack's? Does any one remember the very low, indelicate bodices and scanty dresses of our respected mothers in those days?

Let him then rejoice in the simple, natural way in which hair is now worn among our fair; let him approve the more modest costume, the full and flowing skirts, the comparative absence of art, and the prevalence of that decorum which covers such a multitude of sins in our continental neighbours.

Next let him wish, for the sake of society, not that Almack's, as it was, should be restored—for the component parts are lost, the members died out, the secret of combination is lost—but that every association for the public gratification should exhibit the propriety of Almack's, with a little of its exclusiveness. We were too exclusive once; we are now too lax: I say rather, since people must have amusement, that each class should have its Almack's; each class maintain its own position and reputation; each class admit its own worthy members, without striving either to enter into that of others, or descending to soil its purity by the admission of damaged nobility, or to lower its standard by the false good-nature which should allow inferiority of position, in so far as it implies inferiority of mind or manners, to enter its sphere.

CRICKETANA.

No. VIII.

OXFORD v. CAMBRIDGE.—GENTLEMEN PLAYERS, WHEREIN DEFICIENT

WHY can't the Gentlemen beat the Players?

We should like to modify this question and put it thus:

Why are the Gentlemen so frequently beaten, not having won the match since 'Mr. Kempson's year,' just ten years since? Why is it so apparent to every one who looked on at the match just lost, that the same side would, on the same ground, have won nineteen matches out of twenty?

In stating this opinion we speak on a supposition of the habits, hallucinations, and inexperience of the Gentlemen remaining (which they would not be) exactly the same.

The old solutions of the mystery, though very sensible, are not quite enough. We hear that the Players can muster more nearly their best Eleven than the Gentlemen can; though we hear nothing of the fact that the Gentlemen may select from thousands while the Players comparatively are as tens. We hear, also, that 'it is the bowling that does it,' with too little allowance for the fact that the Gentlemen are generally used to the Players' bowling while the Players are new to the bowling of the Gentlemen.

Now we freely admit that the bowling has much to do with the constant defeat; but we must deny that it accounts for the wide difference so glaring as the score papers, not only of the last match, but of the matches played regularly since 1835, (1838 and 1839 excepted) and three times with odds; as with two bowlers given, or 'barn-door,' wickets to bowl at as in 1837, or 'players under thirty,' as last year.

The very wide difference in the scores we account for in the manner following:—

1. That Lord's ground, while very trying to all players, even the oldest if not accustomed to it, is doubly trying to all young players.

On this point we invite all old

players to revive their youthful recollections, and to say whether our own experience has not also been theirs too. Surely we all must remember that when very confident of scoring on our own ground, we have been sadly disappointed when playing elsewhere—perhaps when taken away from home in the plenitude of our self-satisfaction to astonish the natives and to make a cruel example of some inferior country club.

On the Oxford ground I remember we had good clear light, but when once opposed to Mr. Budd at Purton, I saw three or four shades of a dark belt of trees on every slow ball he delivered: and the ball came provokingly dropping in high curves, just as if to mock my unhappy eyesight. But strange fancies as to ground, and even an objection to wickets pitched diagonally, is not peculiar to 'colts;' for I remember when, in 1838, I came to Lord's to play the 'Left-handed men of England v. the M.C.C.:' and Mr. Aislaby had pitched the wickets up and down, instead of, as usual, across the slope, even the oldest players began to grumble at being put out of their usual way, and the wickets were changed!

Our friends will readily recollect, from these instances, the extreme sensitiveness of young cricketers on any little local peculiarities to which practised players are indifferent. The value of a Cricketer in an Eleven is commonly estimated by his play alone; but much depends on a certain amount of experience; for experience alone will give him an intuitive perception of the quality of the ground, and the power of adapting his play to every variety of circumstance.

If this is true anywhere, nowhere is this experience and this versatility required as much as at Lord's; for not only do young men play more ambitiously, as affected by the cog-

noscenti in the Pavilion and the presence and cheers of thousands, than Players do, but the ground is very peculiar as to the timing—it varies even from day to day; a rainy night having many a time made the game all against the one party and all in favour of the other. But at all times the batsman must expect a greatly increased bias from the slope, and even a greater bias at the higher than at the lower wicket. The unevenness of the ground also renders indispensable—what is very rare with that brilliant hitting which is naturally learnt, because it may answer well, on true ground—I mean the habit of watching the ball right up to the bat, and not playing to the pitch only. To hold the bat for the ball to hit it is quite fatal at Lord's, though not very wise play anywhere.

But next I must be so bold as to maintain that the Gentlemen are beaten in the batting also. They play rather a showy than a winning game; and here again Lord's ground renders the steady game of the Players more winning and the fast game of the Gentlemen more losing than would elsewhere be the case. 'If the ball takes to shooting,' said an old player before the game began, 'I know three or four of the best of the Gentlemen who will not stop it: they may stop an odd one or two, but they are no good against what I call shooting bowling.' This was said by a man who appears to us always to follow the rule which we claim to have been the first to publish: he *eyes every ball as if it would prove a shooter*, whereas others are all for the rise, and think it 'hard lines' if it shoots.

The truth of this player's remark was very evident from the style of the play of——, but we will avoid names, especially as the play of the same gentleman was, in many respects, a treat to see. But Mr. C. D. Walker and the Hon. De Grey looked more the sort of play for Lord's; they looked as if defence was first and hitting was second. Mr. V. Walker's innings was also delightful to see on the second day, as was also Mr. Wright's, and on the first day Mr. Benthall's; all these players

'looked like business:' but there is a certain sanguine style which we recognize at a glance as not 'the winning game.' No. A severe system of defence and rigidly straight play—expecting every ball to be straight, and every straight ball to prove a shooter, is the play for Lord's. With any other style a man may have a brilliant innings sometimes, but he is the wrong man to oppose to Jackson, Willsher, and Tarrant on Lord's ground. On the Oval, each of these players being very plain bowlers, and fast bowling being easy enough on very true ground, an amateur has an easier game. Three days after the match at Lord's, Mr. Mitchell scored (with only one mistake) seventy-five runs against three of the best bowlers of the day, Hodgson, Atkinson, and Willsher.

The fame of Mr. Grace rendered all the field anxious to see him: but the opinion of good judges before the game commenced, was, that Lord's was the very worst ground for him: and we suspect that if he played regularly at Lord's he would modify his present style of play, for he depends too much on the eye, and that is a game which was never yet known to answer long. Griffiths has this year added a straight bat to his well-known power of hitting. We strongly recommend Mr. Grace to do the same. We believe as fully as any one that there is an unusual power of cricket in Mr. Grace. But however keen the eye, and however great the natural quickness, cross play will not answer, but the breadth and length of wood that moves between the bowler and the wicket will tell at last. A distinguished member of the Surrey Club suggests that, as a means of shortening the innings, a quarter of an inch off the width of the bat would make a very great difference. But what is a quarter of an inch to the loss of wood resulting from a slanting bat?

One disadvantage of the Gentlemen is that they feel a faster game is expected of them. They have learnt a variety of hits, and they are impatient to bring them into requisition. There is more inven-

tion in their play, and while it lasts it is infinitely better worth seeing; but when every old cricketer feels certain that the more freely they are hitting, the more liable to be betrayed into some wild play, and the less prepared they are becoming for a fast shooter, the admiration of the spectator is apt to be damped by his regard for the score.

Again, there are two kinds of play which we must endeavour to explain. Excuse our philosophizing when we say the law of habit reigns supreme in cricket. Take Grundy, Parr, and Carpenter. I would almost stake my fortune on the fact that any one of these three men will play the same ball in the same way from the beginning of the season to the end. They have formed so rigid and inflexible a habit that they seem almost like automatons in this, that they do not seem to have the least notion—to say nothing of any temptation—of making positively wild or foolish hits. Experience has placed certain dangerous modes of play altogether aside. They have seen and suffered for certain things so often that they are never to be thought of more.

This *habitual* play characterizes the Players' game—partly because they are more experienced and have been punished out of many wild practices, but more especially because they are less inventive or experimental than men of education. The Hon. C. G. Lyttelton is undoubtedly a fine player, but for playing under the difficulties of Lord's we should like a little more of the Grundy look about the generality—as if their energies were concentrated on defence and the hitting were second in their minds. In the second innings no less than four of the Gentlemen lost their wickets, if not by making up their minds to swipe before the ball came, at least by a kind of play equally wild and equally beyond their better judgment—and why? Because their style of play is not *habitual*—it is not set or fixed as the natural and inflexible principle of their cricketing existence. Resolution to play steadily is not enough—habit is the stronger principle. What a man is used to do

that he will do. Our Oxford friends may illustrate their ethics from the cricket field, and may discover they have a 'law in the members' too strong for the 'law in the mind'—in plain English, You never can depend on eleven amateur batsmen not to have four or five at least among the number who will be suddenly betrayed into some wild trick which no professional would ever dream of.

This want of confirmed habits of play marks the difference between young players and old. There are a certain number of ways of being out—*ten* at the least—dangers which Pilch would avoid even if he played at sixty years of age. And these ten foolish tricks make such a set-off against play in other respects the most brilliant, that I am never surprised to see the dull, monotonous batting of an average professional produce a better average than one of the most dashing of the amateurs.

Add to all these causes of inferiority that 'the Gentlemen' have nerves but the Players have none. Their powers vary more from day to day; they are more subject to atmospheric influences—to wit, the atmosphere of opera boxes and hot rooms, and not the better for cooling down by ice and refrigerators various. I am afraid of appearing to reflect upon their pluck, though in reality it is a point rather of sensitiveness, or I would say that the Gentlemen's Eleven is more subject to a panic and more easily demoralized when the game goes one way.

Influenced by these considerations, I was so bold as to say to a friend that the Gentlemen were not beaten by the bowling only—nay, I would put Jackson and Tarrant on the Gentlemen's side, and back the Players after all. This opinion being received with amazement, I argued that the Eleven Players of England would, against Jackson and Tarrant, be worth 140 to 150 runs on Lord's, with wickets as they are now prepared, whereas the Gentlemen were not worth above 100.

A man whom many call the best player in England stood by and observed, 'Sir, I would back the

Players, because our batting is much better. The plain truth is the Gentlemen do not "play the game." (He meant 'they cannot be depended on to play the game.') 'I can play as fast a game as any one of them if I please; but I dare not do it. And if they played, as we do, on every variety of ground and against continually strange bowling, they would soon find it out.'

He meant to say that guess hitting—hitting out for the long field before there is time to see the rise of the ball, and putting hitting first instead of defence first—that this would never answer. The Player walks up to his wicket to make what is on the ball: but the very appearance of the Gentleman shows that he is impatient of every ball that is not fit for hitting.

I am quite sure that in the days when the Hons. Ponsonby and Grimston formed the Gentlemen's Eleven you did not see the same wild play you see at present. They 'played the game,' and much of the present hitting was then not practised, not because they could not do it, but because it had been tried and not found to answer. The bowling of Lillywhite, Cobbett, Redgate, and Hillyer had that accuracy of pitch and that erratic spin about it that everything but a severe style of defence was proved a loss in a very short time.

The Universities' match had more than one point of interest, to me especially, as I had the honour of playing the first Universities' match that ever was played at Lord's, though the Cantabs, with Mr. Herbert Jenner, played once at Oxford in 1829. In 1836 among my opponents I could reckon the well-known names of Charles Taylor, Frederic Ponsonby, and Broughton—and we should have had Kirwan, but the King's men could not play. And where, after twenty-seven years, are my old compeers? Rawlinson is deep in Egyptian and other historic researches; Ryle is sowing broadcast tracts and good seed of other kinds; C. Duke Yonge supplies ammunition for the shooting-grounds of Etonian and many other 'young ideas,' and older minds too—

for we had seven classmen or prize-men in our Eleven, and four at least have passed away. Goring is lost to Sussex; Vance was killed by a fall, as both his father and his brother had been before him; Sibthorpe, and, but one month since, Charles, the last surviving son of Lord Frederic Beauchamp, are numbered with the dead.

In the two Elevens we recognized by their names a son of Lord Lyttelton in the Cambridge Eleven of 1838; Wright, son of F. B. Wright, of the famous Wykehamist Eleven, and afterwards of the Oxford Eleven in the days of Knatchbull, Meyrick, Price, Pool, and others; and Garnier, son of one of the steadiest of our Eleven at the same date.

And what comparison do we draw of the play of these as compared with our own days? Though in some respect *laudator temporis acti se puero*, I must admit that round-arm bowling was in its infancy. The Cantabs gave us 33 by wickets, and we gave them 14; and as to the batting, we had not above three in our Oxford Eleven who would have been worthy a place in the same side now. Of the Cambridge players I cannot speak so positively, but I think three is as many bats as they could have supplied to a side as good as played this year at Lord's. However, a year or two later made a great difference, Oxford having Mr. Lowth, who bowled successfully against the Players, and Mr. Charles Taylor having several in his Eleven nearly as good as himself. Still the play of this date must not be underrated, because the M. C. C., with Cobbett, Lillywhite, and Bailey, nearly at their best day found men at both Universities to score from 30 to 50 runs—a score far too many for anything but good play.

As to the Universities' contest on the 22nd of June, in the presence of some six thousand spectators, every one was speculating on the probable result of the match—a point in which there was scope for arguments on both sides. The Oxonians had been reputed the stronger: still, the achievements of the Hon. C. G. Lyttelton against the Surrey bowlers gave quite as

fair a promise as anything the Oxonians had done against the Marylebone; and as the Cambridge had first innings they were rather the favourites with the betting men. Neither had the game commenced above ten minutes before things looked very fair for Cambridge. The Hon. T. De Grey and Mr. Tuck were opposed by Messrs. Teape and R. C. Walker; and so well did they play the bowling, which was very good, that 17 were scored without loss of a wicket; and well knowing that in cricket the 'first blow is half the battle,' we were almost afraid the bowling might be collared at the first throw off. But then there came an important change. The Hon. T. De Grey was caught cleverly at short-leg; his successor, Mr. Marshall, brilliantly caught by Mr. Haygarth, undoubtedly a first-rate wicket keeper; and soon such fractions as $\frac{7}{10}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ spoke of a different state of things.

And now Mr. Daniel, known as a fearful hitter, and the Hon. C. G. Lyttelton were partners, and the Oxonians, fearing a stand made by two such men, replaced Mr. Teape by Mr. Scott, a left-handed bowler much faster than Jackson: whom on rougher ground even Grundy seemed to play with his chin high in air. This change proved successful. Mr. Daniel's wicket and his successor's fell by two successive balls; and then Mr. Scott bowled wides enough to shame his side into taking him off: though to win the game I should have kept him on, for no one could do anything with his balls. Still neither in length or straightness was there anything to recommend it. On smooth ground it would be worth very little.

The Hon. C. G. Lyttelton ('not out, 19') played very like a player—steadily and judiciously, in a style that showed more cricket than all the swiping in the match. But his side was all down for only 65. This seemed very small; but the sodden and deceitful working of the ground, old players remarked, might puzzle the other side also.

Messrs. Walker and Garnier, whom we deemed especially likely to feel at home at Lord's, began well

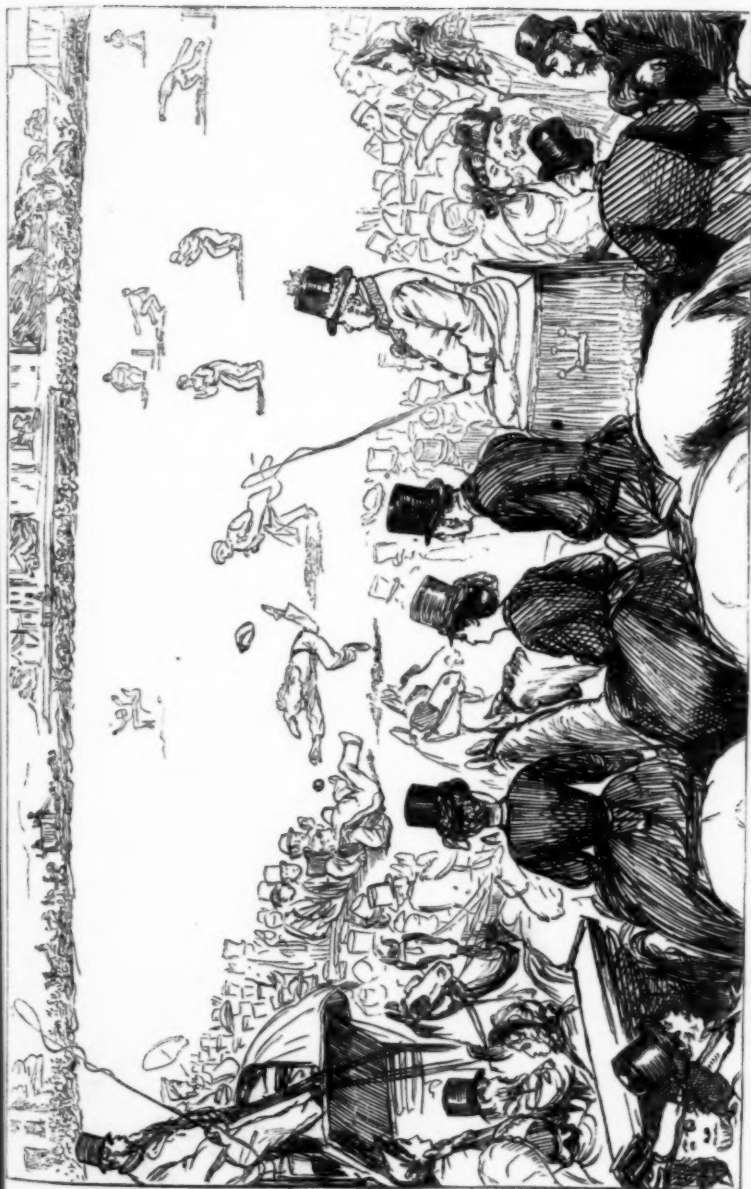
to the point of 17, when Mr. Garnier was beautifully caught at short slip; next came Mr. Wright—'Wright of Rossall School'—a name by which that gentleman was known after his score of 50, made quite like a player with the utmost ease and no mistake, in the North and South match last year. Wright was the man we would have backed, especially at Lord's, at choice against any one of either side; but 'the Fates forbade': he was bowled at once by one of Mr. Plowden's slow balls: and now the wickets, like those of Cambridge, fell apace. Mr. Evans made a stand for 25; fortunately, though Mr. Plowden took a wicket with almost every ball that could have hit one—how, or why, we did not understand. The talk of the Pavilion was that 'he had established a funk,' with the usual disasters consequent on all demoralized and panic-stricken forces. But we think there was no little luck in the matter. For slow bowling working remarkably on that damp ground, as Mr. Plowden's did, it is rather dangerous to play back; still, very few players do we ever see playing 'slows' forward and getting at the pitch of them till they have waited an Over or two to get their eyes open; and, luckily for Mr. Plowden, before that desirable object had been arrived at, he had settled his man. The Oxonians came out in a minority of 7 runs.

Still, it was evident that the Oxford side had the better bowling, and we looked confidently to the result of the second innings.

Neither were we disappointed. Mr. Voules and Mr. Teape bowled remarkably well; and the ground helped the bowlers very much. With such bowling and wicket-keeping very little hitting could be expected. Lyttelton was bowled by a ball that broke down the hill beyond computation, and the whole innings was but 61.

The Oxonians had thus to make 69 only to win. Mr. Garnier, now deemed as valuable a bat as any on their side, was out for 3 runs, and the play ended for the first day.

The fielding on both sides had been first-rate. Mr. Marshall at



THE UNIVERSITY CRICKET MATCH—A SKETCH AT 'LORDS'.
Drawn by G. du Maurier.

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long-stop, Mr. Daniel at long-leg, and Mr. Wright at point, with Mr. Garnier—attracted especial admiration, though there was scarcely a second-rate fieldsmen on either side. Indeed, accustomed as we have been to see the professionals field—much older men, and men wanting that zest and stimulus which never is more rife than in our University contests—we were struck with the difference of the activity of youth and maturer years.

About twenty is the age of the most elastic tissues. Mr. Marshall we saw make a catch at the Oval which Mortlock would never have hoped to reach; and Mr. Tuck at point caught Mr. Walker by running in to a ball which Carpenter could not have been down quick enough to save; and every long hit was saved for a three, when usual it were four. The byes or leg-byes, which, with the best play, average 4 to 100 runs, were only 2 to 126 lost by Oxford, and 6 to 127 by Cambridge—very good, considering Mr. Hope Grant bowls, like Mr. Scott, an extraordinary pace.

It was fortunate for Cambridge that Mr. Daniel caught Mr. Mitchell at long-leg for 2 runs. The fine innings he has made since at the Oval for 75 shows that he is in his best play. A singular thing occurred at the end of the second innings of the Cambridge side. Mr. Hope Grant was lame, and rather skipping than running between the wickets, when once the ball was handled by the wicket-keeper, and Mr. Grant three yards at least from home, yet, to the surprise of all, his wicket was not put down. 'How magnanimous, not to take advantage of a lame man!' said some; but the truth was, he owed his escape and ten runs to the score to the fact that the wicket-keeper thought no run was being attempted!

Tuesday was a beautifully bright—quite a cricket day, and an unusually large number of spectators came to see the 'tug of war.' Under no circumstances could any one reasonably expect to see nine such wickets lowered for 66 runs, but the state of the ground—now much more lively and true, was much less

favourable for Mr. Plowden's bowling.

The Cambridge began with Mr. Hope Grant—perhaps not a bad move. Steady play could hardly win, and very swift bowling is known to have its lucky days with two or three wickets to an Over; and though this happens but once in a season, we always have an impression that the game is on the dice. However, Mr. Grant's, unlike Mr. Scott's fast bowling, is of the plainest description, and was played confidently and well, both by Mr. Walker and Mr. Inge, and as to Mr. Plowden's bowling, after one or two Overs, it was quite evident he had met his match: he was regularly 'understood' and 'found out.' Every ball pitched near enough not to be played easily back, almost as a long hop, Mr. Inge boldly stepped in to meet quite at the pitch, and, without lifting it, drove it safely and forcibly to the corner of the ground: threes and fours followed in rapid succession. Mr. Walker was cleverly caught, as aforesaid, by Mr. Tuck at point; still the same game did Mr. Inge continue with Mr. Evans as his partner, till the scorers held up their broadsheets to say Enough—and out of the 68 runs 48 were made by Mr. Inge.

Thus ended the twenty-seventh match between Oxford and Cambridge. Each University had won thirteen previously, and now the Oxonians have one game in advance. If we reckon batting, bowling, and especially wicket-keeping (which is rarely very good), as well as fielding, we doubt if Oxford ever sent a better Eleven into the field. The batting of both sides, with few exceptions, is open to the remark, too widely applicable at the present day, that the play seems too much accommodated to that modern race of *cognoscenti* who come to Lord's to see—not batting, but hitting, and hitting of the 'astronomical' kind; for we observe that the higher it goes in the air the more vociferously do people applaud it. The truth is men bat—remember we do not say 'practise batting'—too much. They swipe away by the hour; fallaciously supposing that they have only to

practise hitting, and that stopping or systematic play (since they know how it should be done in a strict match) they can command at any time. Never was there a greater mistake; *as you do in practice so will you do in a game*—habit is a much stronger principle than resolution, quite as much so in cricket as in matters of more serious consequence. The writer of these papers has always maintained that valuable habits

are formed in our cricket fields as in our schools, and many are disciplined in the one who learn little in the other. He therefore insists on 'playing with the head.' But these and similar opinions he has endeavoured to illustrate in an o'er-true tale of school, college, and London life.*

* 'Dragon's Teeth.' By the Rev. James Pycroft. 2 vols. at Booth's, and all circulating libraries.

Fashionable Promenades :

RICHMOND HILL.

THE silence of the evening comes apace,
And twilight gathers in the shadows still :
At such an hour, so lovely is the place,
One could not choose but stroll on Richmond Hill.

The paradise of poets, who have sung
Its beauties—but, we ask, if poets' lays,
Or eloquence from any mortal tongue,
Could hope to say enough in Richmond's praise ?

Go ask those ladies, who, with many a smile
And pretty glance are moving to and fro—
They stop, and on the landscape gaze a while,
And turning round they answer, smiling, 'No.'

Go ask the stately swell, who through his glass
Looks at the ladies that about him go ;
He will glance round him with admiring face,
And answer with enthusiastic 'No.'

And when men have an hour or two to spare,
Leaving the town behind them, they may fill
Their hearts with gladness, in a place so fair
And full of memories as Richmond Hill.

When it grows late, and people one by one
Depart, and all the air is still around,
When we are left with reverie alone
Or fairy fancy on the enchanted ground ;

More fair the place than ever! and there floats—
While not a leaf is ruffled by a breeze—
Radiance from star to star—those silver boats
That ride at anchor in the heavenly seas.

Then might one wish that, as earth's troubles fill
Our anxious hearts with care and lives with pain,
The sun that set behind yon distant hill
Might never rise to look on woe again.



FASHIONABLE FEMININE FURNITURE.



Drawn by Walter Crane.

FASHIONABLE PROMENADES: RICHMOND HILL.

[See the Form.]

GOLF.

'Nam etiam excidentēs,
Unius admonitione verbi in
Memoriam reponuntur.'—QUINT. *Inst.*

PLEASANT is the sound of golf to thousands of Scotchmen, and to not a few Englishmen, recalling many a friendly contest and many a cheerful walk in the breezy freshness of the open links—pleasant, though sad, the memories of golfing friends and companions scattered—or gone.

This purely national game has the special recommendation that it can be played and enjoyed at all ages and by all classes. Doubtless there is a wide difference in a contest between a couple of old gentlemen who walk at two miles an hour, and whose longest strokes are fifty or sixty yards, and the strong and skilful play of two fine golfers, who send their balls whizzing far and sure over bank and brae; but each party has equal interest and enjoyment, equal air, and exercise. The artisan and the schoolboy have their intervals of leisure for the healthful game, and can have their daily round, without expense, and without being bound to remain too long; while the active man of business may, from time to time, relax a little, have his golf, and be quite within call for any pressing duty.

These advantages, and the wide, expansive, healthful nature of the game, make it justly popular, far beyond such affairs as bowls, quoits, &c., which are cramped pastimes, well enough for a time, but not free, open exercise, and no more to be compared with golf than an amble in Rotten Row with a crashing gallop in Leicestershire.

Cricket is a noble game, but it requires constant practice to do any good—a score or so of players to make a game of interest—and a lengthened time to play. Moreover, one's day's comfort may be destroyed by a trifling slip or mischance; one gets put out, having had no play, and vexed and discontented *past remedy*. Nay; even under the most favourable circumstances four-fifths of the time is spent in looking on, or trotting after

balls—but golf is a perpetual innings. Mistakes or mishaps may be remedied by careful play—it affords agreeable change of place and variety of ground—time is one's own, and temper is rarely too sorely tried. Cricket! pooh, pooh, not a leg to stand on!

But, friend Sawney, saith the reader, are hunting, shooting, and fishing not equal to your glorified golf? Granted; BUT they demand travel, time, leisure, money, and there are such things as blank days. Golf has *no* blank days, and always beautifully suits itself to the resources of her Majesty's subjects in tendon, time, and tin.—Q. E. D.

Golf is of very great antiquity. Kings have delighted to send afar the flying ball and make the skilful put. Statesmen, soldiers, and men of science have all their representatives on the golfing green, and at this moment there are few men of mark in Scotland who are not members of a golf club.

The dashing fox-hunter enjoys this open game particularly; indeed, the late Sir D. Baird, who was noted both as a fox-hunter and a golfer, declared that, if obliged, he would rather forego his hunting.

The gallant Sir Hope Grant is a keen and famous golfer, and in the midst of arduous work abroad, longed for a good game, and, when lately home, enjoyed it to the full.

Any day, on St. Andrew's links, may be observed an old grey-haired gentleman riding (by special privilege) a pony, and dismounting to make his stroke. This is the brave General Sir J. Lowe.

Equal enjoyment has the man of science, business, or leisure in this fascinating game; and yet it is scarcely to be believed, yet true, that in this nineteenth century there are unfortunates who have never even heard of golf—and others, yet lower in the scale of intelligence, in whose benighted minds the game of games is associated with hinch-pin, nurr and

spell, and such plebeian mysteries. My readers are of another stamp; many know the game, and will read of it with pleasure. Others having of course seen, read, or heard of golf, must turn for information, and seek a yet clearer understanding of how it is done.

For this end I shall endeavour, shortly and plainly, without technicality, to explain the implements used in golf; and where, and in what manner, it is played—referring my reader, for minute detail and practical guidance, to a work on the subject, entitled ‘*Rambling Remarks on Golf*,’* and published by Messrs. Chambers of Edinburgh.

The requisites for playing this game in completeness and comfort are—

- A set of clubs of various sizes;
- A knowing caddy (or club-carrier);
- A few golf balls; and
- A good sort of fellow to play against.

A set of clubs of eight or ten may cost about 2*l.* or 3*l.*, and should last nearly a lifetime, with a trifling occasional outlay for a new club, or chance breakage.

These clubs are of different lengths, from thirty-six to forty-five inches, with shafts of seasoned hickory, ash, or lancewood, about the thickness of a man's thumb at the handle, and tapering to the size of the little finger at the bottom, where the head is spliced on.

The club heads are of varied forms, to suit the stroke to the nature of the ground where the ball may happen to lie; they are carefully and neatly fashioned of thorn or other tough wood, and are loaded with lead and faced with horn.

Two or three of a set of clubs have heads of flattened iron for striking the ball out of difficult ground.

Each club in the set has a different name (‘play club,’ ‘spoon,’ ‘cleek,’ ‘putter,’ &c.), and is placed at once by the caddy into the player's hands, when required.

Golf balls are about half the size

of a billiard ball, and until a few years ago, they were made by crumming leather cases with feathers, and then cost 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* each. Now they are made of hammered gutta-percha, and painted white; they are hard as wood, and heavier; these gutta-percha balls fly quite as far as the old sort, and run truer on the ground, from being more spherical.

A fair stroke at golf may be said to be from a hundred and fifty to a hundred and seventy yards. Now and then a long driver may send a ball above two hundred yards if it should get a smooth run on alighting. In all strokes, both hands are used with the club, which is bound at the handle with leather strips, to make the grasp firmer.

Golf is played on wide open parks, meadows, or ‘links’*—a match, or game, is usually between two persons, each playing his own ball. When foursome or double matches are played, still only two balls are used, and played alternately by the parties—the match being two against two. The holes are from a hundred and fifty yards to a quarter of a mile apart.

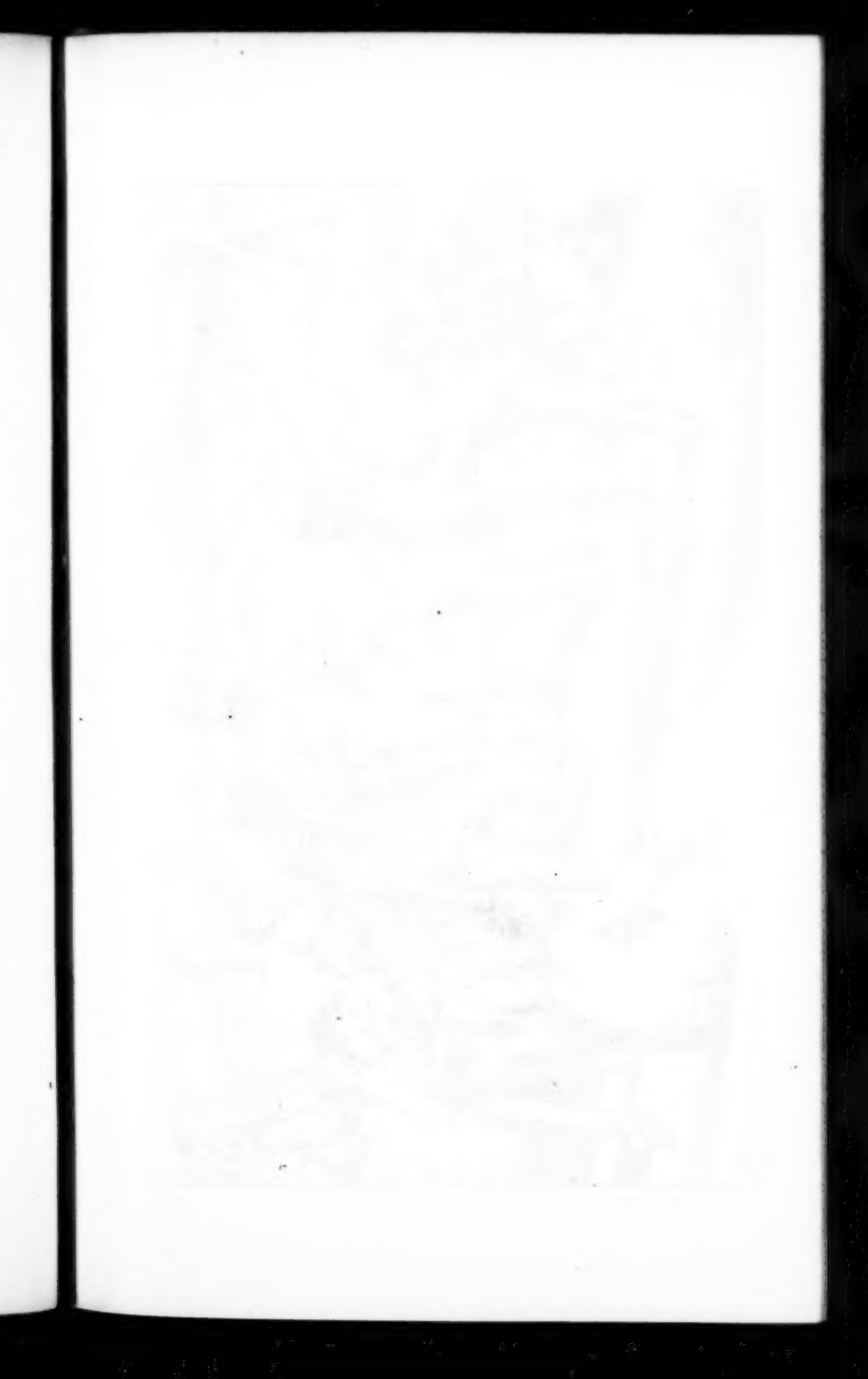
The game consists simply in this: Each party strikes his ball in turn towards the hole, and he who reaches it and holes his ball in fewest strokes, gains the hole; and as the players walk on and play their own ball by alternate strokes, watching each other's play, it makes the match sociable as well as interesting. The first hole is decided either by being divided, or what is called halved; or is won by one of the players having done it in fewer strokes than the other.

The winner of the majority of holes in the round, gains the match, and also counts the number of holes by which he has beaten his antagonist. Thus, if the round be eighteen holes, and one of the players has gained twelve of the round, he is said to win a match and six holes.

At the great golf meetings, only one day is allowed in playing for

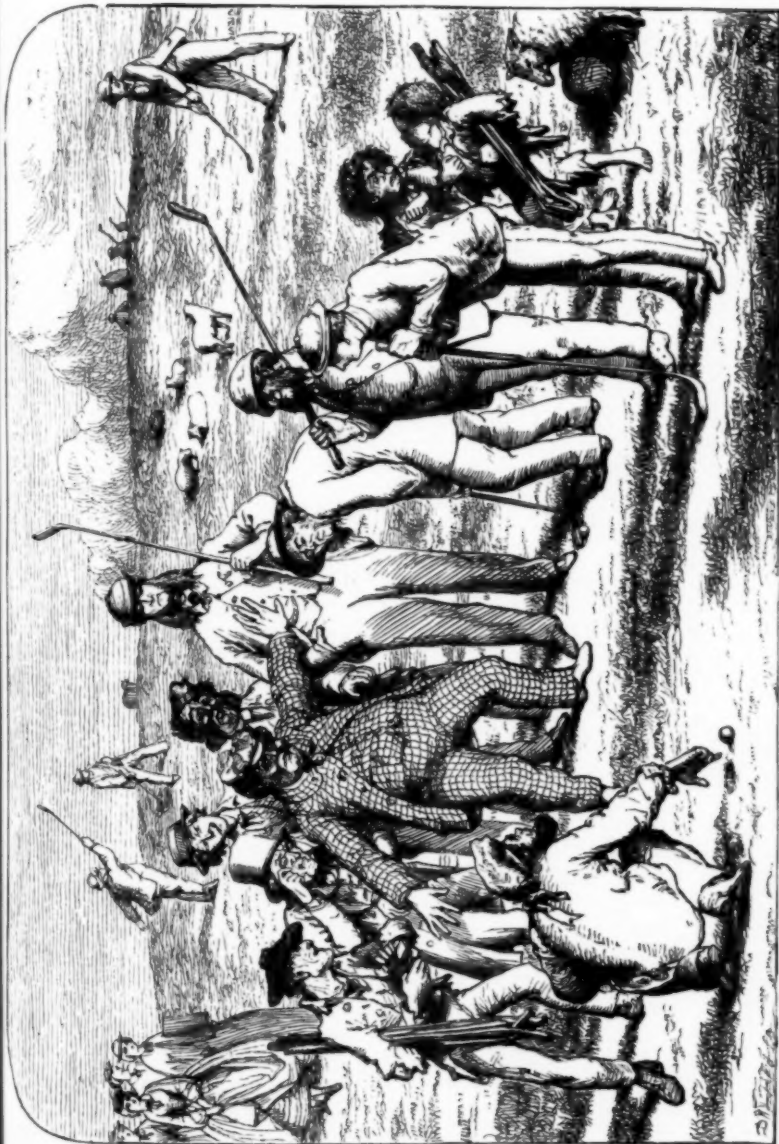
* Links, the term given in Scotland to extensive grassy tracts by the sea-shore: those played on are miles in extent. A round of St. Andrew's links is four and a half miles.

* So miscalled, as the rambling remarks are few and dry; yet it is a perfect manual of golf, curiously definite and correct.



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Drawn by C. A. Doyle.

GOLF.

[See the Sketch.]

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medals or prizes of honour, the laurels being decided, at this time, by doing the holes in rotation in fewest strokes, as individual contests, for a majority of holes, would be interminable.

Next day is resumed the more pleasant fashion of party contests and counting the holes: this makes matters go much more pleasantly than by a long reckoning. Each hole stands for itself, as that one is gained or lost, and with the exception of scoring one (in, say a round of twenty, to either party) the errors of the past are left behind—one hole lost being the direst result from any single act of bad play or turn of fortune, however disastrous at the moment. This elasticity is the beautiful feature of the game.

So, gentle reader, having both lucidly and curtly shown you the golfer's weapons and mode of warfare, let us now have a pleasant little journey and see a veritable campaign.

Fancy then, that, Asmodeus-like, I have carried you to St. Andrews, the Melton of golf, and the very Palmyra of ecclesiastical ruins.

Fancy that we have traversed the clean, airy streets of the Scottish Oxford, visited her grand and perfect library, and admired her noble colleges; that we have passed by hoary tower and through mouldering archway; moved thoughtfully by the tombs of burly soldier, gentle scholar, and scheming priest; flitted in monastic gloom through the gorgeous and gigantic cathedral remains of this antique little city; and that we now stand, in the blazing sunshine, on the battery fronting the German Ocean.

What a change! from the contemplation of hoary damp and ghoulish decay, to face the ever-living freshness of the glittering sea, stretching in unruffled beauty to the very verge of the horizon.

Is it not a vision of promise and peace? From far below come the sweet voices of children gathering shells, and out in the bay the sea-mews are floating listlessly on the smooth swell of the tide wave.

Now take a cigar and come along to the links. Not yet. You are

asking what are these great ivy-covered ruins on the promontory? The crumbling remains of the proud Cardinal Beaton's castle. Ay, changed, indeed, are these vaulted arches and sculptured battlements. Mark the vast space enclosed within the broken wall. Yes, I mean that now grassy platform, where girls are laughing and playing croquet—that platform, once the pavement of the castle, trod by haughty priest and predatory noble—fancy one of those rapacious falcons entering that merry dovecot! Eheu! for the croquet; but we must move, as we have not come to study past glories, but present golf.

At last we are at the right place—that neat building below the obelisk is the club-house. Come in and be introduced. Well, we shall suppose friendly greetings, &c., within the fine, cheerful room; the parlour, whose windows look right upon the glorious expanse of that paradise of golfers, the Links of St. Andrews.

It is now half-past eleven in the forenoon; several parties have already started, with the proper intervals demanded by strict rule, for the safety and convenience of players. There are still a few players left, and these are donning their light jackets and hob-nailed shoes, or giving out their implements to their caddies: two or three old gentlemen, non-players, are quietly smoking their morning cigar, and discussing the news. Ah! here they come at last, the two I wish you to see play (Capt. F—— and Mr. M——); they are very well matched, and both first-rate golfers. While the Captain is giving out his clubs, and Mr. M—— scribbling a note, we shall go out to the starting-place, they will be on the links presently.

Before they come out, I may promise that there are few games where the probable results may be so nearly calculated on as golf. In cricket or billiards a slip or a fluke may be fatal. Not so in golf; what is called luck is, on the whole, an unimportant item—a bad break, perhaps, that means, the ball being diverted in its course from alighting on a stone or broken ground; but

this does not necessarily lose the hole, and is not often ruinous if it should: good luck, on the other hand, is nearly confined to a good break, or to a steal, that is, holing the ball at an unusual and unlikely distance; but even this is not all luck, for the ball must have been well and carefully played, although, perhaps, a trifle over-rewarded. Indeed, as a rule, with very few exceptions (and these neither frequent nor vital) good play leads to good results, while bad play infallibly leads to grief. No flukes in golf; and the Devil himself could not cheat.

Oh! the caddies have just placed the balls for the hit off, and the players, club in hand, are about making the start. You observe they are both handsome men, in prime vigour and activity. As you must see golf in perfection, we shall go the round along with them.

The balls being teed, Captain F—— hits off, driving his ball about one hundred and sixty yards towards the hole. Mr. M—— follows, and his ball lies a little to the right of that of the Captain. Let us go on.

On coming to the balls, Mr. M—— is farthest from the hole, and so he plays again, 'One more,' this time he uses one of his iron-headed clubs, lifting his ball clear and neatly across the watercourse, and dropping it within ten yards of the hole. Captain F—— plays his second stroke, or 'the like,' and his ball is run close to the hole. Mr. M—— plays his third to the very edge of the hole, but not into it. Captain F—— plays his third, and holes his ball, and therefore wins the first hole.

One—in favour of the Captain. He has the honour of leading, as winning the last, and again strikes off a fairish hit. Mr. M—— follows with one of those beautiful strokes now and then made, the ball flying for fifty or sixty yards close to the ground, and making a high, sweeping curve before alighting: this hole is well contested and halved, each player doing it in equal strokes. Away they go for the third. This is a very ticklish hole, and requires both dash and prudence to make it in five strokes. Well and fairly struck

both. The next stroke equally good. The third the Captain's ball falls short, and drops into a bunker, or sandpit. While M—— lies clear, F—— takes his heavy iron, and aiming for a sloping stroke, and a little below his ball, hits with great force, and the ball, amidst a great puff of sand, is lifted clear of the pit. M——, though not so fortunate as might have been looked for, has yet an advantage, and he brings his skill and care to take full benefit of his better ground, and runs his ball beautifully to the edge of the hole. Of course F—— requires two more strokes to hole, and M—— holes easily in one, and wins this hole. And thus the play is carried on with varied success from hole to hole.

We are now at the far end of the links, and at the turn to play home Captain F—— is one hole ahead. All the way home the play is close and steady. Mr. M—— has succeeded in rubbing off the hole he was behind, and at one period was some holes ahead. When three holes from the finish, they are again equal, the first is divided, the second skilfully won by the Captain, and the last is halved. So Captain F—— wins the match only by one hole: a very equal and capital game.

Let us go into the club, and get some soda and sherry. Many of the players are now in the room, chatting over the events of the first round. Several go round a second time, making, in all, a ten miles' walk, amongst others our friends F—— and M——. But we have had a stiff walk, so it may be better to take a gentle saunter up the links, and see the different players coming in.

Amusing enough it is to note the variety. You see that party of four who have just passed: the match is a gentleman and a professional against another gentleman and a professional. The weakest of the gentlemen gets the best of the two professionals as his partner. They have been playing the same match over and over for weeks, with varied success, but unvaried interest.

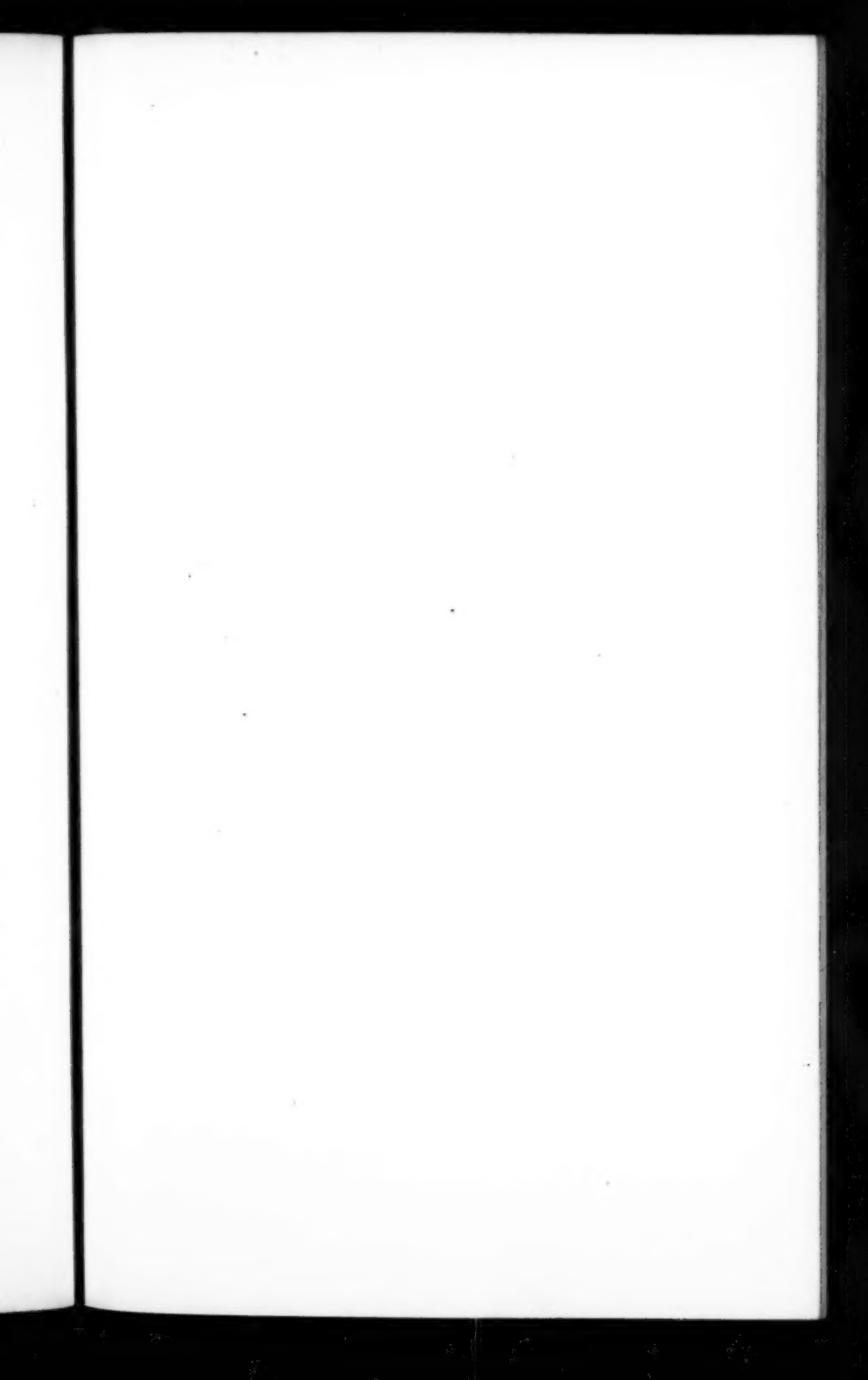
See, again, these two elderly men; you can tell at a glance they are not *habitués* of the links, but steady-



Drawn by C. A. Doyle.

• DRIVING. •







Drawn by F. Wirgman.

HINTS ON CRINOLINE.

[See "Circular Letter to the Daughters of Europe."



HINTS BY CHINOLINE

(See "Gleaner Letter to the Daughters of Europe.")

going citizens of some large town; and, as tide is now up, you might safely bet that they have wives and children disporting in the sea. Note the frock coat and light cap of the one and the tight boots of the other—symptoms, plain, of innocence. Still they are strong and eager; and the stouter gentleman—he with the light cap and jolly face—is gloriously triumphant, while the other is grimly receiving counsel from his caddy, and bent on retrieving—but, alas! not to-day. And sorely will he be badgered at the family dinner at five o'clock.

Here you see pass a pair of dandy players, with a lady or two as spectators. There a brace of boys, who

handle their clubs with an *aplomb* that promises future greatness. And thus from day to day goes on the changing and lively pageant, pregnant with health and honest pleasure.

Thus, gentle reader and future golfer, I carry you back, and place you nicely again into your reading chair, not wearied, I trust, with your little excursion into the region of golf. And in saying farewell, let me hope that by-and-by you may be walking with active steps through the links, muscles braced and club in hand; and that, blessing (as bless you must) the day you perused this article, you may include me in the benediction.

T. W.

A CIRCULAR LETTER.

DAUGHTERS OF EUROPE! NATURE is great, but crinoline is greater!—yea, gramercy, too great. Perambulating bell-tents! caricatures of your sex, let me say a few words to you—let me reason, or even question you. Are you happy in your fortifications? Are you not bored with the weight of clothing? During the Illuminations how you cut the shins, blocked up the road, and otherwise disturbed the peace and happiness of thousands! Tell me how long do you intend to keep your friends away? I would willingly walk with you or drive with you; but really, as the case at present stands, I must beg to decline. I have shins as well as feelings. Let me therefore hope that you will some day see the folly of your costume, and will adopt something more graceful and rational, and not make yourselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world. Do you know that the Japanese ambassadors took crinoline back with them, thinking, very justly, that it was the most curious specimen of European folly they could take? How Moriyama laughed when he told me! Let me beg of you to consider the matter, 'do da deahs.'

How lovely you look at a *bal costumé*, divested of your hideous skirts!

how nimbly and gracefully you flit about, causing the heart of man to be glad and to smile! You appear not the same beings—and were you always so attired, I should love you even unto distraction; but now, alas! it is impossible, and I am compelled once more to fly the country, and return to far-distant lands, where crinoline hath not yet made its appearance, nor ever will, I hope. Cruel ones, thus to drive away one who returned from the East, predisposed to lay his heart at your 'poor feet!' but who is now once more a wanderer and a vagabond. You have broken the spell, dispelled the illusion, and driven him to despair. Yea, I will once more seek the daughters of Kathay, the maids of Chung-kwo (they who wear the breeches!); also will yet find the *Musmés* of Nipon, the skirtless ones, who occupy no space, whose petticoats are circumscribed. I fly! Adieu, women of Europe! Perchance I may once more return, with the hope of finding you lovely as now, but more approachable. Ponder my words—consider the subject—contemplate the Japanese girl in the woodcut, and weep! Farewell! Beware of exalted situations till attired otherwise; and believe in the disinterested advice of your friend,

EKAIBISANG.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER.

A London Story.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH OUR SIDE GETS REINFORCED.

THE second Monday after our overhearing the conversation between Agnes and Edith, the latter appeared at the breakfast table. She headed it too, and I must acknowledge that the coffee was much hotter and stronger, and the table much better laid and supplied than when Emily managed it. I thought I ought to appear surprised, though I had quite expected to see her there; so I put on a smiling look, and said—

‘Why, it is not Sunday, is it?’

Edith did not call me ‘hypocrite,’ but she looked it, as, without a word, she turned her back on me, and sat down to the table. I suppose Agnes understood that look, for she was colder than ever, and even silly Emily looked grave.

No one spoke till Nelly came down and took her usual place; then she turned to me and said—

‘Do you know, Mr. West, Georgy is coming home to-day.’

‘And who is Georgy?’ I asked.

‘Why, one of us—our sister, to be sure. You can’t have listened much to our conversation, Mr. West,’ she added, reproachfully, ‘or you would have heard us speak of Georgy. You know she is coming home for—that is, till she can find something else.’

‘Our affairs can’t interest Mr. West, Nelly dear,’ said Edith.

I pretended not to hear her remark, but turned to Nelly, and paid great attention to all she said. She told me that Georgy was a year younger than Edith, but much shorter, and that she was very gay and noisy.

When I returned home in the evening, I met Edith coming out of the drawing-room, with her sleeves tucked up after the fashion of housemaids, when they are doing what they call their ‘work.’ She did not look at all vexed at seeing me; on the contrary, she pointed into the drawing-room, which looked very comfortable, with its drawn curtains and lighted lamp, and said—

‘We shall sit in the drawing-room for the future, Mr. West, at least whilst I am at home to arrange it. I dare say you will find it more suitable to your ideas of propriety to pass the evenings there than in the parlour.’

‘It is certainly more agreeable,’ I replied, stiffly; ‘still I am sorry that you should perform such uncongenial work on my account.’

‘Oh! it is not only on your account. I myself detest sitting with a number of persons in a small room. It is to give myself the luxury of being a lady in the evening that I act the housemaid in the morning. A questionable display of refinement, perhaps, you will think—however, such is the case.’

She gathered up her old dress more tightly as she spoke, and swept down stairs with the dignity of a queen.

I could not make out the change from amused contempt to bitter disdain with which she treated me. I have never lived much with women, certainly never studied their peculiarities. I know their general qualities and distinguishing marks and weaknesses as only books teach them, so if I could not understand Edith Bush I may be excused. If I had known then what I know now of womankind, I should have seen that I personally had very little to do with this change in her temper. I should have guessed that there was some constant anxiety annoying and harassing her, which, acting on a naturally fiery and unbending disposition, produced the effect I noticed.

I went down to the drawing-room about half-past seven, and there I found a small, imp-like looking being, dressed in a light flounced muslin with pink ribbons, comfortably lying on the sofa. As I entered she rose up with a bound, tossing her brown curly hair back, and then

looking up at me with the brightest, bird-like looking eyes, said—

'I suppose you are Mr. West.'

I told her she was quite right in her supposition, and offered to shake hands. She did put her hand in mine, but looking up at me all the time with such quizzical, daring eyes, that I felt impertinence was a family failing.

'You've come from the country, Nelly tells me,' I said, condescendingly. I had to look such a long way down before I could discover this small young lady, that I felt condescending.

'Yes, I was governess to the Henleys, in Hertfordshire; but I wasn't old enough, or grave enough, or something. So—so I've come back again.'

That imp a governess! I was silent, thinking what strange people I had dropped among; and wondering why Agnes and Emily didn't exert themselves to earn something, instead of risking that morsel of a creature on the wide world.

'I know what you are thinking,' she exclaimed, suddenly throwing herself into her former position on the sofa. 'Well, I will tell you why I went out as a governess. You see, papa didn't wish any of us to go away from home; but when we grew poor, Edith got so disagreeable, that she and I were always quarrelling. Well, papa said he would not live in the house with us, so Edith wanted to go out; but you see she's such a drudging, housekeeping, economical person—quite the useful, while I am only the ornamental—so the day went against me. But—here I am back again, like a bad shilling.'

I was not surprised to hear the two sisters quarrelled. To compare even their persons—Edith, tall, dignified; Georgy, tiny, saucy-looking, for all the world just like a little worrying gnat—was sufficient to tell you there could not be much harmony between the pair.

'One comfort is,' added the young lady on the sofa, 'if I've lost my situation, Edith's lost hers too; so she can't make much fuss about me.'

As Georgy spoke Edith entered the room, all trace of the housemaid having disappeared.

She smiled contemptuously as she saw how close to her sister I was sitting, and I was fool enough to get up at once.

At tea, Georgy kept up her reputation for noise and gaiety. She quizzed and imitated every member of the family she had just quitted—she uttered the most absurd nonsense, and kept us all laughing in spite of ourselves. I could see the father scarcely approved of such wild ways before me, and Edith looked annoyed; but the young lady seemed to care very little about either of them, and went on talking and laughing, quite content to be the centre of attraction.

As we were sitting there the servant girl came up to tell me a gentleman wanted to speak to me. She always announced my friends in that style. I rose—I confess rather reluctantly, for I was very comfortably ensconced in a corner of the sofa, and had only just received my second cup from Edith's hand.

Georgy exclaimed, 'Well, then, show him up.' Then, turning to Edith, she added, 'I can't say, my dear Edith; Ann's manners repay all the pains you have bestowed on her.'

'I wish you would have the kindness to mind your own business, and not give orders here,' Edith answered, fiercely. 'Mr. West's friends are not our friends.'

As she spoke, Smith walked in. Now this was just what my 'convenient' friend had often desired; but I, fond as I was of him, did not consider him exactly the man to be introduced into such a family. As I said before, Smith was a clever man, with expensive habits, pleasant manners, and empty pockets. I always believed him to be the soul of honour, so far, of course, as his notions of honour extended.

To come and pour out all his fascinations as homage at the feet of a poor pretty girl, and then, when he had won her affections, but was himself getting a little—a little—why, a fellow should not go *too* far, you know—certainly stood within the limits of his notion.

The idea of a poor man marrying a poor girl never entered his head as

within the limits of the tangible. He even went so far as to think it impossible for even a young girl to entertain such an idea. 'Sentiment, my dear West,' he would say to me, 'is insanity everywhere but in books.'

There was no help for it; my conscience was free, at any rate; and anyhow there stood Smith in the doorway, bowing in a very agreeable manner. I must go forward and introduce him.

Mr. Bush was very gracious; all the daughters, too, except Edith, looked rather pleased than otherwise. That impish little Georgy's influence had already begun to tell.

'May I offer you a cup of tea?' Edith said, coldly, and Smith accepted, very much to her annoyance, for there was none left, and she was obliged to make more. After he had taken it she retired to the back room, and occupied herself in some mysterious manner. It was not with work or reading, nor exactly writing.

Meanwhile Georgy, in the front room, was perfect queen, and divided her gracious attention pretty equally between Smith and myself.

Suddenly Smith noticed the piano, and exclaimed, 'Ah—a piano! Now, Miss Georgy, I'm sure you play.'

'Hush! I should have to ask permission, and at that my pride revolts,' replied the young lady, with a shake of her small person.

'Tell me of whom to ask it, and I will, with the greatest pleasure.'

Georgy pointed over her shoulder into the back room, with a little toss of her head.

'There,' she whispered; 'but don't say I am going to play.'

Smith laughed, and went up to Edith, and returned in an instant dangling a bunch of keys; and then Georgy sat down to the piano and jingled through a few waltzes and polkas, very much to her own satisfaction, if not to that of her hearers.

Smith pretended immense delight, and he was in the midst of some flowery compliments when Ann opened the door, and in walked Mr. Grainger.

I happened to look at Edith as Agnes rose and said, 'Ah, Mr. Grainger, how do you do?'

If ever disgust disfigured a woman's face, it did hers at that moment; still she came forward in another minute, smiling as if delighted to see him. I watched her closely that evening: I was anxious to understand the part she was playing; but she seemed so natural, that if it was a part she acted in encouraging the evident attentions of Mr. Grainger, it was performed to perfection.

Another month passed. Smith came constantly, and flirted with Georgy. I found it pleasant enough now, in spite of Edith. We were always well received by the gay, imp-like little Georgy. Emily and Agnes kept a kind of neutral ground, while Mr. Bush was very civil. So, for a time, I had the best of it.

I thought Edith seemed rather more contented, though she never gave us the least encouragement. She left us very much to ourselves, and rather avoided having any wordy war. She would pass me quickly on the stairs, even if she were in her untidiest condition; and she even saw me once knock over a milk-jug, spilling the contents and breaking the jug, without making any offensive remark.

Georgy was very amusing, but distressingly lazy; and I began to distinguish between the refinement that preferred disorder to the shockiness of doing dirty work, and the refinement that, rather than exist amidst confusion, thought nothing of dirtying her hands terribly and washing them again. It was very agreeable to find Georgy always dressed in those tasty muslins, looking fresh and lady-like, with her white hands, and filbert nails, and glossy curls, giving one just an idea of perfume when she passed; but then to be received in a close, dusty, untidy room, to find the tea late when you came home tired, and the water smoky, and the things in your room unarranged, and everything at sixes and sevens—as it was once when Edith suddenly disappeared for a week from H—Terrace, and Georgy took the head of affairs—rather disgusted me with the first kind of refinement.

The young person seemed in much

better humour when she reappeared—she was even civil; but she never mentioned where she had been, or for what; and I don't think even Georgy knew, or she would have told us. Georgy was very communicative, but we could never discover from her why Edith disliked me so. She said she supposed it was natural disagreeableness, and advised us to act on the offensive. She said it was the only way with Edith: if you didn't bully her, why she would you—it was her nature. She had been born a tyrant, and she supposed she would die one; but, at any rate, she should never tyrannize over her, Georgy Bush.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROPOSED PARTY AT NO. 3, AND WHAT EDITH THOUGHT OF IT.

While Edith was away, Georgy had been trying to work up her sisters to the giving of a small party. Quiet home life didn't at all suit this restless, vain little being, and I think she was even beginning to weary of Smith's constant attentions, and pine after a greater number of admirers.

Georgy was rather an expensive game to Smith. He bought her music, which she couldn't play, but which she said she was dying for; books, which she never read, but which she liked to display to admiring sisters; flowers from Covent Garden, which she allowed to lie about till Edith came with orderly hands to their succour; and latterly I noticed lockets, and bracelets, and brooches constantly varying about the small decked-out person of Miss Georgy.

I couldn't for a moment imagine Smith was in love; I knew his principles too well, still he seemed to be going rather far this time for a man of his age. Smith was over thirty.

I came home about four o'clock one Saturday. As I stood in the hall hanging up my coat, I could see Edith standing by the mantelshelf in the parlour examining a paper. There was a look of trouble about her face quite painful, and I thought to myself, 'Strange that all the anx-

iety of the family should be shifted on to the shoulders of this girl!' Agnes was in the room with her, but she seemed to play no active part.

'I must pay it at once,' I heard Edith say. 'It won't do to let papa see it, with that worry about the bill on the 1st hanging over him. I think I ought to pay it, don't you, Agnes?'

'You know best, dear. It seems dreadfully hard though.'

I saw her go to her desk and take out a cheque-book; then she stooped, tore out a leaf, and filled it up, saying to Agnes, 'When Willie comes in send him at once. If these taxes and rates pour in, and papa's affairs don't turn a little, my poor hoard will soon dwindle.'

She came out and we met. 'Mr. Smith is up stairs again,' she said. Her tone implied annoyance, so I said, 'I hope you don't hold me responsible for the follies of my friend.'

'I am not so unjust,' she answered, coldly. As she passed the drawing-room door, Emily called, 'Oh, come in, Edith; you are just the person we want!'

'Yes,' added Georgy, 'do come and tell us, like a clever thing as you are, how we must manage our party.'

'What party?'

'Oh! didn't you know? Ah! it was while you were away, papa gave us leave to have a party. A quiet one, of course, and Mr. Smith has promised to bring a quadrille friend or two; but we can't decide about the supper.'

Edith stood for an instant silent, looking with her scornful eyes full in her sister's face.

'Are you mad, Georgy? You know such a thing is impossible.'

'When you have talked with us a little, Edith, you will see that, on the contrary, it is very possible,' Georgy said, in her gentlest tone.

'I tell you it can't be, it mustn't be,' the other replied; and she turned to walk away, but the worrying little gnat buzzed round her and intercepted her.

'Now just listen, Miss Edith; you sha'n't tyrannize over us all. We

will have a little reasonable pleasure. Agnes wishes it, Emily, Nelly, Mr. West, Mr. Smith, all of us wish it, all but you, and you sha'n't spoil all our happiness. I tell you I will have this party.'

'You *will*; and where is the money to pay for it?' asked Edith, quietly, but her eyes glowing with passion.

'Papa has it,' answered Georgy, undauntedly.

'You talk like a child, and like a child you must be treated. I tell you again it cannot be.'

'It wouldn't be a great expense, Edith,' put in Emily, 'would it, Agnes?' for Agnes had come in quietly during the discussion.

'I think not. Do be obliging, Edith.'

'Indeed, Miss Edith, we are six to one; you must give in,' Smith laughed. 'West and I will supply the champagne and do our share.'

She gave him a look of utter contempt, then she turned to her sisters.

'I do not speak of Georgy,' she said, in a voice almost breathless with passion, 'but I thought you others had some sense of honour in you.'

'You are unreasonable,' said Emily.

'You are ridiculous,' said Georgy. 'We don't depend on you for our bread, why should we bend and obey you?'

'Besilent, I tell you; don't *you* speak to me,' answered Edith. 'Agnes, Emily, have I ever taunted you with such a thing? Listen now, once and for all. You know what I can do if I choose. Shall I unloose Mr. Grainger among you? Now have the party if you dare.'

She spoke with the calmness of intense passion, and then walked out of the room and went up stairs.

We were all silent for a moment. I don't think any of the sisters but Agnes understood the threat, and she turned dreadfully pale. Georgy recovered first. 'I don't believe a word about it,' she exclaimed, 'and we will dare her and have the party.'

But no one seconded the motion, and we all felt very uncomfortable in consequence of that outburst of the young person's temper.

Georgy was horribly sulky, so Smith, to cheer her up, proposed going to the Opera, for a box at which, he said, he had an order; but which he had not offered before because it was not a very good piece that night, but, under circumstances, he thought it would be better to put up with that and take themselves off.

I knew differently. The truth was Smith had just learnt that Mr. Bush had gone to Paris for a week, leaving an elderly female cousin in nominal charge, who, as Georgy said, 'wouldn't be at all tiresome about anything.'

Agnes shook her head and left the room; she was too lazy to enter into a struggle with that worrying little imp; besides, as she said, 'Though Georgy was small she was only two years younger than herself, and might direct her own actions.' Emily needed little persuasion to follow where her volatile sister led, so we soon agreed and made our plans.

As we sat talking and gradually recovering our spirits, the door opened and Edith came in. She was deadly pale; even her lips were white.

'I have come to say,' she said, in a firm but rather low voice, looking at Smith and me, 'that I regret very much having said what I did in your presence. May I trust to your gentlemanly honour not to repeat it?'

'Most certainly,' we both exclaimed, rising from our seats with as much respect as if a queen had stood before us.

There is something so wonderfully powerful in a woman's dignity. Smith held out his hand. 'If I annoyed you, forgive me, Miss Bush; on my honour it was unintentionally.'

She looked up at him for an instant, and I saw the tears rush, clouding her eyes. Her lips moved to speak, but no words came, and she went swiftly out of the room.

'She didn't say a word, Lewis,' Smith told me afterwards, when we talked the scene over, 'but she gave my hand a clasp, just as one fellow would have another's. There's no humbug about that girl at any rate.'



'After he had taken it she retired to the back room, and occupied herself in some mysterious manner. It was not with work or reading, nor exactly writing.'—See p. 174.

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I envied Smith his talent for grappling with opportunity. I might have ended my warfare with Edith at once, I felt, if I had only acted the part he did, but it never entered my head. On the contrary, I dreaded adding to the scene. I could have asked her to play on the piano, sing a song, anything to divert her thoughts; and I am sure those tears of hers affected me quite as much as they did Smith, and I should never have forgiven myself if any word of mine had been the cause of them; and yet—there, I dare say she was considering him a manly, honest fellow, and me a poor, proud, cold fool.

Well, I was vexed, but I couldn't help it.

We went to the Opera, and did not return till nearly twelve o'clock. We heard a magnificent voice singing as we entered, a voice that thrilled through the house.

When we went into the drawing-room we found Edith at the piano, Grainger beside her, and on the sofa, to my utter surprise, sat Wells, playing a game of dominoes with Nelly.

Edith continued her song without noticing our entrance, and, after quietly greeting Wells, we all sat down and listened.

We had just come from the Opera, but I doubt if there was one of us (of course Georgy excepted) who felt that voice inferior to those we had just heard. It might want the artistic finish, but for richness of tone and sweetness certainly it could bear comparison.

As she ended, Grainger came forward to salute me, and Smith went to Edith.

'Indeed, Miss Edith, you hide your candle under a bushel most scrupulously. I have frequented this house for nearly two months and I had no idea you sang.'

'And yet I practise every day,' she answered, smiling. She spoke gently, but seemed weary and unwilling to talk, so Smith let her pass and went back to Georgy, who, by the way, was pouting at his speaking to the enemy; and Edith crossed the room and went and sat down by Nelly, and there stayed with her arm

thrown lovingly round the poor blind child that she might direct her hand in the game.

It was just like Wells's kindheartedness, to pass his evenings playing dominoes and talking childish nonsense to Nelly.

CHAPTER VII.

WE MAKE A GUESS AT EDITH'S SECRET.

After that rather stiff scuffle on Saturday, I felt it would be better to prevent Smith's coming to the house on Sunday, especially as Mr. Bush was absent.

I had a great idea of the young person's spirit, and I thought she was quite capable of making her father settle matters summarily when he returned; and there was something about the grave respectable papa which looked as if he could be roused terribly on occasions.

Now I hate scenes; so directly after breakfast on Sunday morning I drove to Smith's lodgings and persuaded him to go and dine with me at Wells's place, which is about four miles from Richmond.

As I said before, Wells is a quiet kind of fellow, with a wholesome fancy for sticking to the rules his mother taught him—going to church once at least on Sunday, giving money to schools, not playing cards, or drinking spirits, and with a kind of horror of tobacco.

Still he is a clever fellow too. I often fancy he has more real book knowledge than Smith; and that his is more softness of heart than head.

He always goes and spends Sunday in the country with his aunt. This aunt, I must observe, has nothing to do with the property—that all belongs to Wells, who is an orphan, and we have a general invitation to spend Sunday with him.

Smith agreed rather reluctantly. I don't know if the imp really had succeeded in fascinating him, but he certainly spent more time in the female society at H— Terrace than I had ever known him to do in any other.

We had dinner rather early, and then, as the evening was warm and fine, took our wine and cigars to an

arbour that overlooked the river as it wound on its shiny, placid way from Richmond.

Smith drank and smoked a great deal, then he launched out into his usual wit and humour, and gave Wells and I little trouble in regard to conversation. I think it is our untalkative natures that make us such suitable companions for Smith. However, on that night, on the first opportunity, Wells began to speak of the Bushes.

'However did you get to know Grainger?' I asked. Wells flushed slightly.

'To tell you the truth,' he exclaimed, 'not under the most agreeable circumstances, and I was very sorry to find him on terms of such intimacy at your friends the Bushes. If you had not come to-day I should have gone to you—I wanted so much to tell you all about it. We were passing the evening together (for I have my reasons for keeping friendly with him) when we happened to speak of singing, and he said he knew a lady whose voice, in his estimation, equalled that of any public singer he had heard, and he offered to introduce me to her. He said he was on terms of sufficient intimacy to take me to her house then and there if I chose. I accepted, and you know you found me there.'

'But what connection can he have with the family? that he has some is very evident,' I exclaimed.

'He told me the father was his debtor for 300*l.*, and he said, if it were not for the daughter he would be down on him to-morrow. You should have seen the fiendish look of the fellow as he spoke: he would do as he said, I am sure.'

Smith gave a low whistle.

'Do you remember Edith's words yesterday, Lewis?'

Of course I did, and I understood now a good many things that had been mysterious before. The little hoard she had mentioned, that look of disgust when Grainger entered, and her change of manner in his presence, the economy, the hard working. I understood that now. Was she acting a strictly honourable part?

'He told me,' continued Wells, 'he could arrest the father any day; he called him a sneaking rascal, an old thief; but to be abused by Mr. Grainger I thought no dishonour.'

'And do you really mean to say that Edith is engaged to him?' said I slowly, after a pause.

'He didn't say that; he only implied that ultimately she would be his wife. What surprised me was that such a fellow, such a sneaking, cowardly, money-loving wretch should ever have fallen in love with such a girl. Certainly he is a proud fellow, and he knows the Bushes are of good family, while he—he was the natural son of a pawnbroker.'

Both Smith and I started. These are not the times of chivalry, for knights to ride about succouring distressed ladies and others who require help, and we neither of us felt inclined to be Quixotic; but when Wells said, 'I wish we could do something,' we both heartily echoed the wish.

'Of course,' added he, 'I tell you this in confidence: I can assure you, if you knew Grainger—the gambling, drinking blackguard!—as I do, you would feel it almost a Christian duty to warn Edith Bush against him.'

Warn her! Poor girl, that disgustful look I remembered so well, showed she required no warning.

We talked on for some time, exploring very much poor Edith's position, and arguing whether it was honourable or not. I must confess that though we were men, and of course in the general way condemn a woman trifling with a man's feeling, we acquitted Edith, and extolled her conduct. I am sure Wells considered it heroism: Smith said it was more fit for a novel than real life—and I, I thought—alas! for poor human nature—poor degraded human nature, some call it. I wish they would show us how and why it is degraded.

Smith said it wasn't degraded: he called it our natural condition, and talked about man's own institutions as the causes of misery. But he never mentioned Adam and Eve, and he always does talk such free,



‘I could see Edith standing by the mantelshef in the parlour examining a paper. There was a look of trouble about her face quite painful, and I thought to myself, “Strange that all the anxiety of the family should be shifted on to the shoulders of this girl!”’—See p. 175.

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utter nonsense on such matters, particularly after he has been sitting with a cigar and a bottle of wine for an hour after dinner.

I don't know what Georgy would have said to hear him talk, and especially to have heard no mention of her in his conversation.

When we returned to H—Terrace, I found Grainger sitting up in the drawing-room, but Edith was not there. She had not yet come from church. I don't know whether Grainger was afraid of our being so constantly in the company of his lady-love, or not, but he was unusually savage and disagreeable.

In vain Georgy tried her fascination; he refused all conversation, but sat doggedly waiting Edith's arrival.

When she entered, she came up to him with a bright, smiling countenance, looking very handsome; but he received her sulkily, and sat on the sofa looking as dogged and savage as ever. Suddenly he started up and exclaimed—

'Will you go to the Popular Concert to-morrow, Edith?'

She looked up at him in a half-surprised, half-indignant manner.

'You know, Mr. Grainger,' she answered, quickly, 'I have always declined going anywhere in public without my father; you know it is a principle with me.'

He looked very angry, but he was silent. A few minutes afterwards he said to me—

'I find, Mr. West, that Wells is an intimate friend of yours.'

'Very intimate,' I replied; 'I

knew him first at Oxford, and we have been great friends ever since then; indeed I have just come from his place, where Smith and I have been dining; he mentioned to me his acquaintance with you.'

'Acquaintance! why does he call himself a mere acquaintance? does he think I should have brought a mere acquaintance here last night, and told him what I did?'

Edith looked round uneasily, and I saw almost a smile pass over Grainger's face as he caught her eye.

'Well,' he added, rising, evidently having shot the arrow he wished, and seen it strike, 'it's getting late. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow, or, at farthest, the next day,' he said, turning to Edith. 'Good night.'

She shook hands with him in her usual manner, and went as far as the head of the stairs with him.

Can she mean to marry him, or is she an excellent actress? thought I.

She did not re-enter the drawing-room, but went up stairs into the little room.

The next morning, when she came down to breakfast, her face was very pale, and her eyes had the dark heavy look of one who had not slept. She left the breakfast table before any of us, saying, 'If I am not at home by six, don't wait.'

As she spoke, the postman came to the door and brought her a letter. Her face brightened as she reads, afterwards she threw it to Agnes, merely saying, 'Private,' and went out.



THE GUARDS' BALL.

IT was only a bill!

Why did it look stiff and broad, if it did not contain the card? Malicious, to say the least.

The sight of small notes had become abhorrent to me, and now the big envelope proved a delusion. *Misera me.* It would not come at all.

The invitations were out—had I not seen them? Had not Laura and Fanny, and over so many others, got theirs?

Truly a hollow world! Could I any longer wonder at Lieut. Simon Styletes? If there were a pillar in Battersea Park (or any other desert place far off), would it not be most natural that I should on its summit take up my abode?

I went upstairs slowly, and, taking off my bonnet, gazed at the dark and gloomy reflection of my disappointed face.

'Let me be brave,' thought I. 'Let me rise superior to this great misfortune. If I am not to be present at the Guards' Ball, at least let me find pleasure in the enjoyment of others.'

I smiled convulsively at myself. Alas! I could not smile. A deep and yellow fog obscured the windows of my mind—a London particular—shrouding the daylight of my thoughts, forcing me to light the lamp of philosophy in the very noonday, to see my way along the path of life.

A lesson to me, indeed, on human nature. How firmly had I believed in that faithless 'Deuxtemps!' How tenderly granted little Sabretache's petition for 'one more turn!' Had I not waited during a whole Lancers', to let that greedy De'Spurs eat lobster salad at Lady Fozzle's? Had I not done *des bassesses*, to procure a card for Charlie Fairweather to Mrs. Particular's ball? And not one of them had remembered me.

Languidly I went down stairs, and turned over 'Punch' on the drawing-room table. What was that beyond the workbox? what? white—flat—square—The Card!

'There in the twilight cold and grey,
Lifeless but beautiful it lay.'

Is Longfellow—is any poet equal to the description of that sight? My feelings were too much for me. Dear little 'Sabretache!' Best of 'Deuxtemps!' May thy appetite never diminish, De'Spurs; thy shadow never be less, Charlie Fairweather! It was a relief to open the photo. book and gaze fondly at them as they leant confidently on their umbrellas, their backs turned resolutely on Mons. Silvy's fairest landscapes.

The day had come at last. Guardsmen, preoccupied and dusty, rushed in Hansoms to and from Kensington. 'Nothing will be ready in time,' the men said who were not asked. 'It will be a curious mixture,' said the girls not invited. It seemed a mockery to me to spend that day like others—to ride, shop, and drive, as usual; so I spent my day chiefly in vague perambulations up and down stairs, in search of undecided employment, till seven. For 'we must start at half-past eight—at half past punctually,' said my chaperon.

It was with surprise, mingled with admiration, that I discovered my own features under the structure that Mons. Frisette created on my head, and with triumph that I sought in vain for any trace of my figure in the masses of tulle with which Madame Boullion had surrounded me. 'My success is certain,' said I, when I had failed for the third time to get through the doorway.

'You had better take some superlatives with you,' little Sabretache said to me; 'you will want them all,' and he was quite right.

There was no string—we whirled up to the broad pavement and got out at once. 'A little late, or rather early,' Mamma feared.

I was too much awestruck to make any conjecture. A vision of scarlet and gold flashed on me as I entered the great building, where, last summer, such cruel, dusty, pushing and squeezing had left its marks on me; and when I stood at the foot of the staircase, and looked up the line of beautiful brave Guardsmen,

with their bearskins and shining bayonets, I felt as if to speak would break a spell, and dissolve what could only be a dream.

Fair white dresses on the crimson steps fell like scattered snowflakes here and there, between the dark glittering figures. That silent, fragrant entry was a fit preparation for

the fairy scene beyond. We walked on velvet carpets through a saloon into the loveliest summer bower ever built by nature's finger. From a bed of crimson blossom, flowers of every tint, rose in terraces to caress the pearly fountain, whose twin was reflected in the mirrored panels of an ivy-curtained screen be-



yond; brilliant azaleas, stately lily plants, looked forth from the drooping creepers that clustered everywhere, and clung round the gilded cornices.

'Suggestive of rural felicity,' somebody said—'highly suggestive.'

We lingered among the flowers, and made our way slowly up the brilliant jewelled rows in the ball-room, living pictures more beauti-

ful, and if not quite so highly painted, at least as costly as those that graced its walls last summer.

I was still in a state of open-eyed amazement at the splendour, still wondering at the duchesses, staring at the countesses, and recognizing the beautiful red Guardsmen, when the band struck up. A thrill of loyal feeling was mingled with the pain of crushed toes and bent crino-

knees; for all the world pressed forward to see, and all the world was pressed back to make room for the Royal Guests. 'Get me a partner! Quick! quick! Introduce me to some one,' a Guard said, close to me, and much regretting that the old lady to whom he applied had not selected me for the purpose,

I saw a great quadrille form itself, and begin, led by the royal quartette.

Whether a latent spice of the snob then developed itself, or whether it really merited my opinion, I know not, but my admiration of royal dancing was immense. Superlatives were too weak to express my appreciation.



'So also will I dance,' thought I, and wished that in so carrying my head I might have carried like sparkling diamonds.

There were rows of ladies all down the sides of the room, seated on red seats, and there were rows and rows pushing their way up, past, and when they could, over me. 'Why should I be pushed? why not push?' said I; and took my stand desperately.

Calmly the dowagers came on, smiling grimly at a distant acquaintance;—A moment's shock of steel

to steel.—Momentum gained the day—the attraction of gravitation was 'nowhere.' Slowly, but surely, I felt myself turned round, and separated for ever from some yards of ribbon and a bunch of flowers off my unlucky and beloved gown. My idea of my own disposition is, candidly, that I am Justice personified; yet I must confess to having found that the approach of a partner in scarlet, or one in black, awoke the most different feelings. No offence to A, B, or C,—no, nor to dear G, who gave me my first 'canter'; but

one *does* dance better with scarlet—it is quite natural! Look at bulls and turkey-cocks; do they not dance, and dance very much, when they see the colour: why not young ladies?

It was painful also to find oneself alive to low and animal propensities in such a fairy scene; but I own to having become so frightfully hungry that I could have eaten the artificial cherries off my neighbour's head had I not at last been taken into the refreshment-room. 'I want some champagne; so will you come with me?' my friend said to me, as he offered his arm; but he was better than his word, for he gave me pink and yellow topaz nectar out of crystal barrels, in gold and silver goblets, and treated me in general like a princess in a fairy tale. Beyond the buffet was a region veiled by silken curtains, opened later, where white soups and mayonaises ineffable were to be had, and where the gorgeoussness of every possible or probable object are beyond description. I believe that the cakes I ate were of powdered silver, flavoured with essence of rubies and diamonds.

And here let me offer one little hint to the uninitiated—those less knowing than myself—a hint which very small experience will prove wholesome.

Go not, O fair one, into supper with that swiftest of waltzers, that lightest of fantastic toes, that most subtle dancer of Lancers' and quadrilles. His eye will wander restlessly to the ball-room; his ear listen, not to the sweet tale of all your wants, but to the first notes of the dance for which he is engaged to one who will be revenged if he come not.

Nay, go with a married man, one no longer young, and who seeks not in the frivolous, but in the tangible pleasures of the world, solace for its many trials: go with him—I did; and returned to dance like a giant refreshed.

And what dancing it was! what a floor—what music—what everything!

My dress and I parted company considerably. I did not care; the

finest of the fine picked up my tatters, and was generous in pins to repair the mischief; he had the pleasure due to him of caricaturing me afterwards. I had the pins. Let each be satisfied.

It was towards the middle of the evening—of the night rather, that, all honour being due, not to the English regiments of the Brigade only, but to the Scottish also, the war strains of the bagpipe echoed through the ball-room, and a reel fast and furious was danced. A reel—two reels—reels innumerable, interwoven and alternate, as only Scotch reels can be; delightful to all lovers of nationality, noise, and strong exercise.

Kilts there were none, nor waving tartans; but what yelling and flinging aloft of legs and arms could do, was done, and those that were not delighted must at least have been amazed at the spectacle that procured them rest of some minutes from the dancing in which they could join.

I do not at all wonder at the medical student, who, conquered by his longing, entered uninvited, and partook of the delight of that charming ball. I don't know that I should have chosen the floor of the buffet for my resting-place when I was tired. But I think when in durance vile he was requested to repent of his misdemeanours, he must have thought the price small that he had paid for his pleasure. And I will venture to say he was more intoxicated by the beauty of the faces than the excellence of the wine.

'Could it be four o'clock?'

'Five, if you please; look at the gas.' A soft, pure light was falling on the feathery dresses and sweet bright faces in the ball-room. Group by group the golden star-clusters of light were disappearing, and the dawn was looking kindly at us behind a veil that softened its too candid scrutiny. Still the musicians played bravely: like the cherub they 'sat up aloft.' Still the dancers flew round and round: only the row of wallflowers thinned, a stream of hungry happy ones reached that haven of their hope,

the supper-room, before they left—what must have been a glorious penance hitherto.

Let it be pulled down—let its walls be razed, if they will, but let

a monument of gratitude be erected on the spot, in that great International, where the Guards gave the best ball ever given in London. *Dixi!*—I have spoken.



THE MODERN ART OF ADVERTISING.

THERE is a worldly wisdom continually crying aloud at the corners of the streets and arresting a considerable amount of popular attention—a wisdom which, utterly discarding the theory of happiness that would teach mankind to make their wants few, is never tired of reminding us how long we have been satisfied without obtaining possession of those things which properly-constituted minds have recognized as necessities.

Of the thousand conveniences that 'nobody should be without,' a large per-centage becomes so notorious that we dare not acknowledge our ignorance of the comforts they profess to bestow. Of the thousand worthless inventions which are pushed into public notice by loud reiteration of their supposed qualities, a still larger proportion finds purchasers who cannot doubt the testimony of big placards and favourable certificates.

'Nothing is done now without advertising' has become an indisputable statement in relation to almost every trade where there is any possibility of competition; and even the quietest, sternest representatives of the quiet old steady-going men of business, who rejoiced in their scorn of a puff, and long held fast to the proverb, that 'Good wine needs no bush'—have latterly been compelled to adopt the new method which has been introduced by the revolution effected through advertisements.

There is, doubtless, much to be said in favour of our present system, and to people really 'in want' of an article intended to serve a desired purpose, there can be no excuse on the score of ignorance, and much unnecessary trouble is saved: at the same time industry and invention are stimulated, and many actual wants are created which indirectly improve the condition of mankind.

Having frankly, and with considerable difficulty, admitted this much, it is surely excusable to point out the lamentable results which our present system of advertising have brought upon a number of individuals who have a right to be considered, and of whom the present writer is one.

In the first outburst of the advertising mania—the most startling symptoms of which were enormous placards announcing ‘monstre concerts’ and ‘cheap clothing’—the government wisely interfered to prevent huge and sometimes revolving structures of timber, pasteboard, and *papier mâché*, from being drawn through the streets by horses, to the obstruction of roadways and the danger of her Majesty’s subjects. The class of which the present writer is one—the nervous, the hypochondriac, the irritable portion of the London public—may I add that portion of the public possessing a refined organization and a high sense of moral responsibility?—these, I say, were very grateful for this; but what the better are we off at this moment, when the entire street architecture of this great metropolis is emblazoned with garish posters—when every blank wall smells of printers’ ink, and all London seems to have entered into a conspiracy to shout emphatic falsehoods in letters two feet long?

If anything could add to the horror occasioned by this state of things, it would be the miserable want of appropriateness which characterizes the mode of advertising. There was once a chance of an obnoxious ‘bill,’ exhibited on a builder’s hoarding, being overlaid by another less repulsive; but now that the ‘bill-posters’ have themselves become capitalists, and buy up acres of dead wall and temporary fence for their exclusive use, the public is entirely at their mercy; and while the palings enclosing the site for a new chapel flame with dramatic sensations,—the exterior walls of harmonic retreats contain parochial announcements or appeals to the working classes.

Why should an individual with the physical and moral organization

above alluded to be continually startled by the impertinent questions and the still more impertinent assertions which stare upon him on every side? There is at least some redress for us if we are suddenly assaulted, or if we are knocked down and run over by a careless driver in the public streets; and it may be well maintained that these verbal assaults are even more brutal,—these shameless insults to our sensibility more flagrant than any more physical violence. It is true that I have known of very severe personal accidents resulting from a strong north-east wind, and its effects upon the itinerant advertisers who carry great placards upon wooden frames; but these are nothing to the injuries of which I complain.

For what reason, let me ask, am I to be haunted, even in the seclusion of my own house, with inquiries from the opposite wall,—why I pay more than I *do* pay for all sorts of articles of domestic use?—why I do not double up my bedsteads?—whether I know where to go for the commonest necessities of life? Why does some persistent child (I have no family) continually address me as papa, and ask me to take it to some terrible bazaar or toy shop? Why, above all, am I (not advised) but absolutely commanded to eat and drink all sorts of things which would disagree with me;—to read half a dozen newspapers and periodicals (lying publications), each of which has a considerably larger circulation than ‘any other’? Why, above all, am I insulted by being made to speak for myself: and after having seen quite enough of sensation dramas for a lifetime, to declare that I want to see any of them again?

Some of the questions are, on the face of them, grossly immoral. I remember having seen quite an eruption of little black bills on a fence near my house, inquiring if I wanted a cheap funeral; while in some others, addressed to the working classes, the question was artfully insinuated, ‘Why pay rent?’ There was an attempt to explain this shameful question away by some allusion to a building society I

admit; but that is very little to the purpose.

The suburbs of London are distinguished, either by a more glaring display of colour in the bills which adorn the walls, or by a mere reliance upon size as regards the letters. The inhabitants must, many of them, be reduced to the last stage of indignation at the impudent meddling with their affairs which many of these remarks display; or at all events at the assumption of confidential smartness with which they appeal to vulgar readers. I referred the origin of the advertising mania to the monstre concerts and the cheap clothiers, but, in reality, the actual parents of the funny and confidential, and therefore inexpressibly vulgar announcements were the itinerant vendor of ginger beer and the marine store dealer.

Who cannot remember that painted board which adorned the red and blue ginger beer truck, once seen in the streets, but now seldom to be found, except at fairs and on the roadside, by commons and open pleasure-grounds? The design was singularly infelicitous, inasmuch as on a broiling July day it depended for effect solely on recollections of the Christmas pantomime. There was clown, who, speaking from a long inflated bladder protruding from his mouth, was supposed to say, 'Here we are, try our ginger pop;' while to add force to his illustration of its merit, he had just discharged the cork from a bottle into the eye of pantaloon. Meanwhile, a short-waisted lady, with a large parasol, and a gentleman in a light-blue body coat, recorded their conviction 'that that *was* the shop for ginger-pop.'

The present style of theatrical advertisement is so obviously borrowed from the marine store dealer, that there can be no other proof required of the decay of the British drama.

That there may be many unenlightened, shall I say miserably misguided people, over the border of London, to whom slangy appeals are not offensive, I am afraid must be conceded, else why did I have thrust into my hand the other day

a bill which, emanating from a tailor's shop in Whitechapel, spoke of the proprietor as 'a kickies builder,' and made known the fact that as he had 'just made his escape from America, not forgetting to put his mauleys on some of the right sort of stuff,' he was in a position, having 'some ready in his kick, to grab the chance' of buying some material for his business? After reading this, I was scarcely surprised to learn that 'Upper Ben-jamins' were 'built on a downy plan,' that 'Moleskins built hanky panky,' and 'with artful buttons at bottom,' were quoted at 'half a monarch,' or that some other articles of wearing apparel were generally disposed of as 'mud pipes,' 'knee caps,' and 'trotter cases.' Beyond the suburbs themselves the advertisements extend as they decrease in size; but still on park walls, railway arches, and canal bridges the weary public are enjoined to 'try' everything, from gin to soothing syrup, and are furthermore conjured to 'COUGH NO MORE.'

Our public conveyances are but traps in which the tired wayfarer is forced to seek some distraction from the wretched accommodation afforded him by perpetually repeating to himself the form of words from which he fancies he has found a temporary refuge. Almost in despair, and at the suggestion of a friend, I was recently induced to engage that description of cab known as 'a Hansom,' to take me to 'the West End.' There, at least, I believed I should be free from torment. But with a refinement of ingenuity little less than diabolical, an oval announcement of cheap cutlery had been placed on the splash-board, there to stare me mercilessly in the face.

'The West End' itself is of course a saturnalia of advertisements. Announcements that 'He is coming' vie in intensity of colour with blatant injunctions to eat, buy, and see everything; till in a wild jumble of The Duke's Motto, elastic garters, Revalenta Arabica, food for cattle, Morison's pills, the Cure, anti-garotters, and the Original Nerves, the afflicted observer seeks a refuge

in the nearest tavern, where he is fortunate if he doesn't find the very pipe-lights to be mere cardboard slips printed with some sensational recommendation; and will, perhaps, afterwards discover that a circular playbill has been pasted inside his hat by some unseen agent of an enterprising manager.

Of those poor decrepit and suffering creatures, the wretched heralds of every novelty in turn, the wearers of those ghastly tabards which sometimes shock humanity by the strange want of harmony between their inscriptions and the appearance of those who are clothed by them, much might be said. To have seen a procession of old, greasy, and napless men, each of whom was labelled 'The Angel of Midnight,' was startling. To see a poor fainting creature sink from starvation under the burden of announcing 'good and cheap dinners,' was painful; but it was left to one of the representative men of Mr. George Cruikshank to achieve the sublime in this sort of illustration. It was no fault of Mr. Cruikshank, of course; the moral of his great picture was and is obvious—was and is striking: that too convivial herald, faithfully represented by the artist, had never had an opportunity of taking the lesson to his soul.

Wasn't the thing almost a public scandal? Imagine the inveterate toper—the humble worshipper of Bacchus, proposing the health of Mr. Cruikshank with the usual sentiment, 'May he ne'er want a friend nor a bottle to give him!'

I have scarcely been able to walk the West End streets since this last occurrence. Not altogether in consequence of that, however, but because of a very extraordinary accident which befel me recently on my return to town after a short excursion. I was coming home by an evening train on the Blank Dashton Railway, and as we stayed three minutes and a quarter for refreshments, contrived to swallow a cup of hot coffee, and to scramble in a very inflated condition into a carriage just as the train was starting. I had entered a second or third class carriage by mistake, and after a

hurried glance round imagined it to be empty; until I was seized with a violent and disagreeable hicough, the result, I believe, of the coffee. It was at that moment that, looking up from the newspaper over which I had been glancing by the uncertain light, I saw a large burly man who held in his hand a great pill-box. This he extended towards my face, until I read, printed on the lid, 'If this should meet the eye of any one troubled with —.' I was about to thank him, when I was conscious of a dark solemn gentleman at my elbow who whispered in a sepulchral tone, 'Look to your legs.' To hear was to obey. I glanced, not without misgiving, at those limbs. 'Do your trousers fit you?' said a third dapper-looking traveller, who at that moment appeared on the opposite seat and spoke reproachfully. 'To those who have tender feet,' murmured a voice in the corner. 'Let those who are troubled with gout or rheumatism take these pills,' interrupted a sonorous passenger who held in his hand a box similar to the last. 'No more pills nor any other kind of medicine,' retorted an unseen voice. 'It was observed by Dr. Johnson,' resumed the former speaker, persistently. 'Thirty-seven port and matchless sherry,' murmured somebody in the corner. 'Pure and invigorating essence,—bloom of roses and indelible hair-dye;—waterproof leggings—invisible wigs—self-fastening stays—repressible crinolines—surely the prettiest dress worn by boys this hundred years,' said all the passengers, at once plunging into general remarks, but evidently referring to me as the object of conversation. Suddenly I felt some ligature bound tightly round my body. I knew it in an instant; it was a strangely-formed metal band for the cure of goodness knows what; I'd seen its portrait as adjusted to the human figure hundreds of times. Sharp throbs shot through my chest and penetrated every limb. 'Compose yourself,' said a calmly cruel voice at my elbow; 'no pain will be felt in removing either decayed teeth or stumps.' I saw the glitter of the dental instruments, and as they

flashed before my eyes, made a desperate effort to throw off my assailant.

'Hallo, guv'nor! wake up, and don't go knockin' your head agin the lantern that way:—we're a goin' to shunt off the carriages: lucky I happened to look in; an' you all by

yourself too. Where are we! Why London.'

There were no other passengers in the carriage, but the hideous tokens of their presence were blankly staring at me from the wooden panels in the shape of numberless advertisements.



17. *Where are you?*

There were no other persons in the room, yet the bodies of the two persons were found in the middle of the wooden floor in the shape of unbroken slabs.

Special Agent in Charge, New York



"MEMORY WOODFALL,"
THE FATHER OF MODERN "REPORTING."

From a Portrait in the possession of the Family.

LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER 1882



Robert Chambers

London and New York

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